MARVEL MASTERWORKS®
THE BLACK PANTHER®
VOLUME 2

BLACK PANTHER Nos. 1-15
& MARVEL PREMIERE Nos. 51-53
JACK KIRBY, ED HANNIGAN & JERRY BINGHAM

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

PRESENTS

VOLUME 2

COLLECTING

BLACK PANTHER Nos. 1-15

& MARVEL PREMIERE Nos. 51-53

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NOS. 1-15 & MARVEL PREMIERE NOS. 51-53

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BLACK PANTHER CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

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INTRODUCTION
BY CHRISTOPHER PRIEST

Among the biggest regrets of my professional career is never having had the distinct pleasure of meeting Jack "The King" Kirby. In 38 years in this business, I've met and worked with a wide variety of stellar talent at Marvel and DC, which included being first tutored as an intern and, decades later, developing a film with Stan Lee. I'd met Steve Ditko and worked for many years with John and Sal Buscema, Vince Colletta, Bob Kanigher, and many others. But I never had an audience with The King.

I was not introduced to Kirby's work through his seminal investment in comics history—his groundbreaking development work with Stan Lee co-creating the Marvel Universe. Early on, I was not a Marvel fan but an ardent DC reader. I met Mr. Kirby through his paradigm-shifting "Fourth World" saga for DC, a series well ahead of its time, which was wholly underappreciated in its industry-changing potential.

Today, Kirby's "Fourth World" would likely be Earth-K in the DC Multiverse. Kirby's vision was so unique, so startlingly original that, to my thinking, attempts to "mainstream" Kirby's world into what we (whoever "we" might be) consider "regular" or "commercial" comics was as wrong as forcing Bill Parker and C.C. Beck's Fawcett Comics Universe into the DC mainstream. The message that sends is: There Is Only One Way to Do Comics, which, of course, is ridiculous.

There is an enormous bandwidth for artistic expression and experimentation afforded to contemporary creators, the comics industry having evolved beyond a one-size-fits-all mentality. Pioneers like Jim Steranko (*Nick Fury: Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.*), Archie Goodwin and Walter Simonson (*Manhunter*), Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams (*Green Lantern/Green Arrow*), Jim Starlin (*Captain Marvel*), Frank Miller (*Daredevil*) and others forged that path, and, to a man, they all bend their knees to The King for showing them the way.

Our new generation of comics publishers and editors are, thankfully, far more diverse and thinking much more about comics as communications art, aided by the immense broadening of our audience. Robert Kirkman's *The Walking Dead* looks absolutely nothing like *Captain America* which, at this writing, looks absolutely nothing like the Captain America comic I used to write. I believe Jack Kirby's genre-bending, over-the-top, eclectic expressionism would find a much wider and even more enthusiastic audience today.

Stan Lee and Jack Kirby co-created the Black Panther in *Fantastic Four* #52 (1966). From the very beginning, Stan and Jack made it apparent they were writing a man, not just a black man. The Black Panther's race seemed almost beside the point, so much so that I think I was actually a little startled when the character removed his mask. Well, of course he's an African, I thought. But I'd become so caught up in the story that I'd more or less back-burnered that possibility while the Panther was walloping the hell out of the FF.

He was a super hero, period. As king of a fantastic and technologically advanced civilization, he was a fully realized character in his own right, and his ethnicity played absolutely no role in the story. In fact, Stan could have made Panther the king of Spain and the story would have worked.

This was, I imagine, a groundbreaking development. Most every cartoon or comic book character of color had, before Panther, been defined by his or her race. The character of Ace Harlem, from Orrin C. Evans's *All-Negro Comics,* would not work if we changed his ethnicity. Neither would Dell Comics' *Lobo,* the first African American comic book character to star in a series, or Black Panther forerunner Waku, Prince of the Bantu, from Marvel's 1950s predecessor Atlas.

Most post-Panther black super heroes, including Luke Cage, The Falcon, Black Lightning, Black Goliath and others, seemed developed from the standpoint of race more so than character: "Let's create a black hero," more so than, "Let's create a new and innovative hero who just so happens to be black."

This is what made Panther unique in my and many others' experience: Stan and Jack seemed focused on creating an exotic and powerful ally, who could also be the occasional thorn in the side of Marvel's mainstream heroes. Africa made the character exotic, and the character's race was obviously intrinsic to that background.

A Marvel staffer once told me, with a straight face, "Jim, you write the worst black dialogue I've ever read," referring to my characterization of Luke Cage. I'd ratcheted down Luke's wholly ridiculous and inaccurate "street" speech pattern, and, in one example, actually had Luke admitting he could—as can virtually all urban people—turn the slang on and off as it suited him. Neither artist M.D. Bright nor I spoke the way Cage spoke in the comics. His characterization reflected a lack of familiarity with urban street toughs and came more from blaxploitation films and TV stereotypes.

Panther, on the other hand, was immune to most of that. He was every bit as articulate and as thoughtful, as even-tempered, as Captain America or any other Marvel hero. This was a perspective Kirby carried forward in his 1977 *Black Panther* series.

Kirby's *Black Panther* run does not make many popular summaries of the King's best work. There's a lot of competition to get on that list, though. *Panther* marked the conclusion of his career with Marvel Comics, a company literally founded upon The King's shoulders. Having departed the company in 1970 for rival DC Comics, Kirby's return to Marvel in 1975 was greeted with immense fanfare and high expectations. Despite runs on *Captain America* and creating the Marvel Universe-defining *The Eternals*, among others, Kirby's relationship with Marvel during the less creator-friendly '70s remained unsettled. Kirby left Marvel in late 1978 for a stint at Hanna-Barbera animation studios and also helped launch the independent comics movement with his *Captain Victory*, *Silver Star*, and *Destroyer Duck* before officially retiring in 1987.

Having begun my comics career at Marvel in 1978, I was privileged to see and handle original Jack Kirby pages at Marvel's sixth-floor Madison Avenue offices, where thousands of Kirby originals were locked away. Marvel ultimately initiated a program of art returns, returning art boards to the various creative teams (most notably with a controversial allocation to Kirby in 1987). I was awed by the living history in my hands, classic *Thor* and *Incredible Hulk* pages: Stan Lee's words brought vividly to life by The King.

I would imagine that, by most objective views, Kirby's *Black Panther* seemed to be, at face value, not an evolution of his Marvel creationism but an extension of his DC Comics "Fourth World" auteurism—not Stan and Jack, but Kirby unleashed. Kirby's Panther was much larger than life; a good-natured, gregarious high-tech king leaping fearlessly into a halcyon kaleidoscope of broadly realized, colorful characters such as Mr. Little, Princess Zanda, the Six-Million Year Man and Kiber the Cruel. The series boiled over with verve and crackled with energy as Kirby painted both images and characters with broad, bold strokes evocative of *The New Gods* while being decidedly and joyously off-kilter and less serious.

In both tone and execution, Kirby's Panther appeared to be a rapid departure from what had evolved as the mainstream of Marvel's mid-1970s publishing slate—a more photo-realistic Gene Colan/John and Sal Buscema/Gil Kane world grounded in realism and social relevance.

The tonal shift is especially true of Don McGregor and Rich Buckler's brilliant "Panther's Rage" serialized novel from *Jungle Action* #6-18 (reprinted in *Marvel Masterworks: The Black Panther Vol. 1*). Emerging from McGregor's brilliantly detailed and reverently serious work in *Jungle Action*, Kirby's *Black Panther* was quite the jolt to the system: as rapid a departure from one expression to the next as could likely occur while still being, essentially, the same character.

This is what astounded me when I challenged Sal Velluto, a classically trained and very serious neo-classical artist in the Neal Adams vein, to bring Kirby's 1970s Panther to life within the pages of my 1998-2003 *Black Panther* series. Over the course of the evolution of my work with Sal and inker Bob Almond, we'd become a very tight unit. Sal and Bob were wholly invested in the book and routinely went the extra mile developing fantastic graphics for the monthly comic.

I did not want our depiction of Kirby's 1970s Panther to look like Sal's modern-day Panther. I wanted Kirby's Panther—as well as his supporting cast—to look the way they were supposed to; just as they were presented in The King's vision. "Sal, can you handle that?"

The answer was a resounding "yes." Marvel Editor Mike Marts and, I'd imagine, many other Marvel staffers, must have laughed their heads off at the debut of Jack Kirby's Black Panther when he was resurrected from suspended animation at the end of *Black Panther* #40. Not only had Sal managed to absolutely nail Kirby's trademark style, but he credibly integrated Kirby's Panther and his friends into the photo-realistic landscape he and Almond had created for the series. I was both thrilled and greatly relieved. I mean, if Sal and Bob couldn't pull this off, couldn't make Kirby's Panther come alive, the whole storyline was doomed.

From the beginning, my intent was to take Panther back to *Fantastic Four* #52, to the wily and uber-resourceful African king who'd bested the most powerful super-family on Earth. Stan and Jack's Panther's superpower was not his fists or agility, but his intellect—a quality frequently overlooked in subsequent portrayals.

Writing Kirby's Panther during my run was like getting a chance to drive Dad's car. The pleasure was hyped all the more by how brilliantly and amazingly Sal and Bob brought that world to life and, seemingly effortlessly, blended it credibly into our own. The characters all retained their own integrity, like animation characters interacting with live actors on film. It was our little homage to The King as well as our way of saying there really should never be just one "official" way of producing comics.

Kirby's run on *Black Panther* came to an unsatisfying and abrupt end with *Black Panther* #12, The King leaving us on a cliffhanger to be resolved by writers Jim Shooter and Ed Hannigan with art by Jerry Bingham and Gene Day. We are left to speculate about the timing of Kirby's departure and assume that it was his call and not some edict from upstairs. As is often the case in most any professional entertainment, it is the fan who ultimately loses most any misunderstanding or disagreement. Kirby fans were left wondering what had gone wrong.

Hannigan and Bingham forged on for six issues, split between *Black Panther* and the pages of the *Marvel Premiere* anthology. They had two ridiculously tough acts to follow, and did a fine job, wrapping up loose ends from both Kirby and McGregor's tenures.

Black Panther has traditionally never been a big seller in any incarnation. I believe the character's ethnicity plays some role; past that, the adventures set primarily in an exotic environment—rather than what Stan Lee described as, "the world outside your window"—proved the larger impediment.

In comics, we are in the business of selling ongoing relationships with characters fans have grown to love. The characters and situations need to be relatable, at least in a metaphorical sense. So while I don't ascribe Panther's midrange sales performance exclusively to the character's race, I do believe the numbers bear out that the closer to home (or an identifiable environment) the stories take place in, the stronger the numbers become.

American super-hero comics have traditionally been created by white males for a largely white male audience. Panther's largely all-African cast, even seeded with Jack's mind-warping additions like Zanda and Mr. Little, likely did not provide enough audience-mirroring for a broader range of readers.

The entire time I was writing *Black Panther*, we were all fighting for our lives. The book was always on the brink of cancellation and, despite rave reviews and mainstream media attention, we could not move the needle on sales.

Film director and former BET president Reginald Hudlin's 2005 *Black Panther* series launched as a runaway hit, and writer, journalist, and educator Ta-Nehisi Coates' Panther is, at this writing, the top-selling comic in the industry. All of which suggests times are indeed changing for the better as our current cultural renaissance—breaking down ethnic and gender barriers—is now rapidly propelling American society toward catching up to the rest of the mostly colorblind, enlightened world.

– Priest
2016

P.S. A quick shout-out to longtime friends of mine Chris Claremont and John Byrne. Their backup story for *Marvel Team-Up* #100 set in motion the epic love story of T'Challa and Ororo. I'm quite sure neither knew, at the time, that the story would grow as it did into a foundational episode in Panther's history.

Despite our faux antagonism, I deeply admire Chris' writing (I literally hugged him when first meeting him in editor Roger Stern's office at Marvel). I've had the distinct pleasure of working with John Byrne, a consummate professional, on the Spider-Man titles and greatly appreciated his brilliant evolution of the genre, abetted by another wonderful artist, inker Terry Austin. You'll find Chris and John's story from *Marvel Team-Up* #100 as a bonus feature at the back of this volume.

Christopher James Priest is the first African American writer and editor to work in the comic book industry with runs on Conan, Power Man & Iron Fist, Amazing Spider-Man, Green Lantern, The Ray, Captain America & The Falcon *and many others. With artist M.D. Bright, Priest created the hit Acclaim Comics series* Quantum & Woody, *and his groundbreaking* Black Panther *series was lauded by* Entertainment Weekly *and* The Village Voice. Static Shock, *which Priest cocreated with Milestone Media, Inc., was the first nationally syndicated African-American super hero animated series. Priest is currently writing* Deathstroke *for DC Comics and developing projects with Milestone Media, Inc.*

BLACK PANTHER
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JAN
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FIRST ISSUE! THE ALL-NEW, ALL-EXCITING
BLACK PANTHER™
HE'S BACK! AS ONLY JACK KIRBY CAN DO IT!
THEY SEARCHED FOR IT! THEY FOUGHT--AND EVEN KILLED FOR IT! WHAT WAS IT?
KING SOLOMON'S FROG!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY: JACK KIRBY | INKED BY: MIKE ROYER | CONSULTING EDITOR: ARCHIE GOODWIN

THERE HAVE BEEN OBJECTS THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF HISTORY WHICH HAVE BEEN SOUGHT AFTER, FOUGHT OVER, AND DIED FOR...BUT NEVER WAS THERE SUCH AN ARTIFACT AS THIS THING OF BURNISHED BRASS!! MYSTERIOUS AND LITTLE KNOWN, IT WAS THE CENTER OF MANY STRANGE AND UNEXPECTED HAPPENINGS!! NOW, THE BLACK PANTHER HAS ANSWERED ITS CALL! WILL HE FALL VICTIM TO--

King Solomon's FROG!

YOUR FRIEND DOESN'T SEEM ALARMED BY OUR VISIT! IN FACT, HE'S NOT MOVING AT ALL!!
I WAS RIGHT!
THAT'S QUEELY IN THE CHAIR! HE'S GOT THE BRASS FROG!!
LETTERED BY MIKE ROYER
COLORED BY DAVE HUNT

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ALFRED QUEELY SITS AS INANIMATELY AS THE OBJECT IN HIS HAND... HIS HAND IS STIFFENED IN RIGOR MORTIS AND HIS DEAD EYES IGNORE THE SHAMBLES WHICH SURROUND HIM.

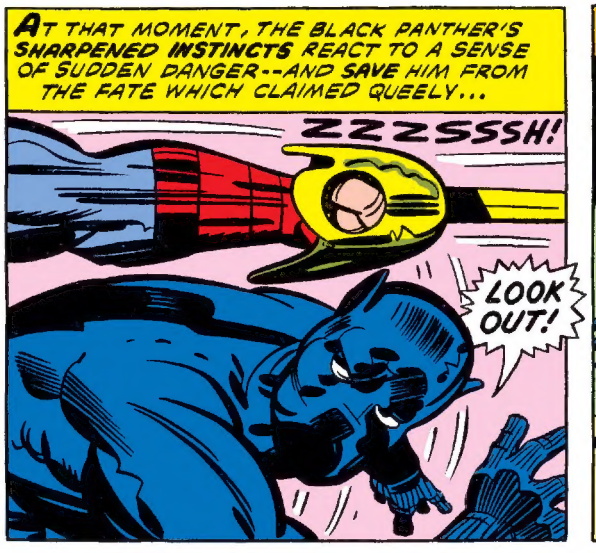
HE'S DEAD!! THERE'S A WOUND IN HIS CHEST--AS IF HE'D BEEN RUN THROUGH BY A -- SWORD THRUST!!

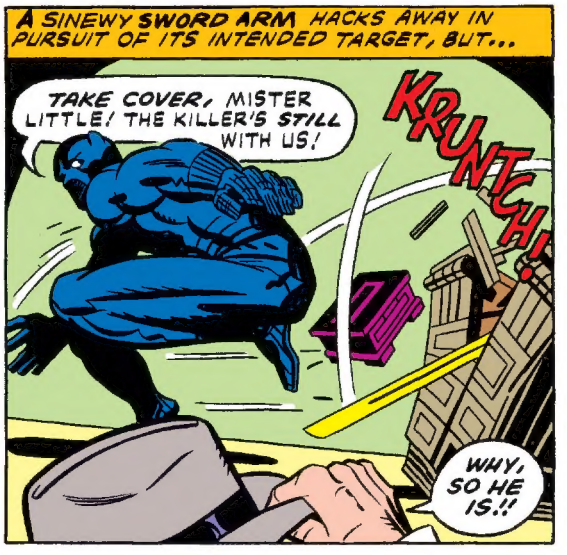
POOR HAPLESS FOOL!!

I'LL TAKE POSSESSION OF THIS, NOW!

AND SO ENDS THE MISERABLE CAREER OF ALFRED QUEELY--RECLUSE, COLLECTOR, AND THIEF!
BUT THE VERY OBJECT HE STOLE BECAME THE INSTRUMENT OF HIS DEATH!!
THAT'S SHEER NONSENSE, MISTER LITTLE!

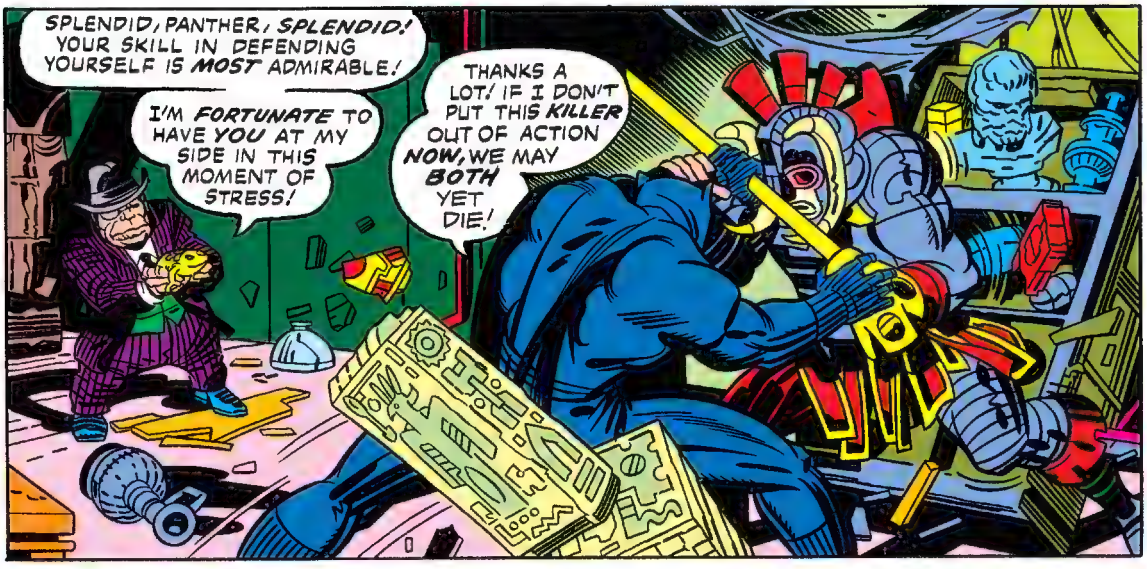
WHOEVER KILLED QUEELY MOVED FASTER THAN THAT FROG EVER WILL. THAT WOUND WAS FRESH! IT MAY HAVE BEEN INFLICTED ONLY MOMENTS BEFORE WE ARRIVED!!
OH, THE FROG DID HIM IN, ALL RIGHT! QUEELY MUST'VE BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH IT.


AT THAT MOMENT, THE BLACK PANTHER'S SHARPENED INSTINCTS REACT TO A SENSE OF SUDDEN DANGER--AND SAVE HIM FROM THE FATE WHICH CLAIMED QUEELY...
ZZZSSSH!
LOOK OUT!

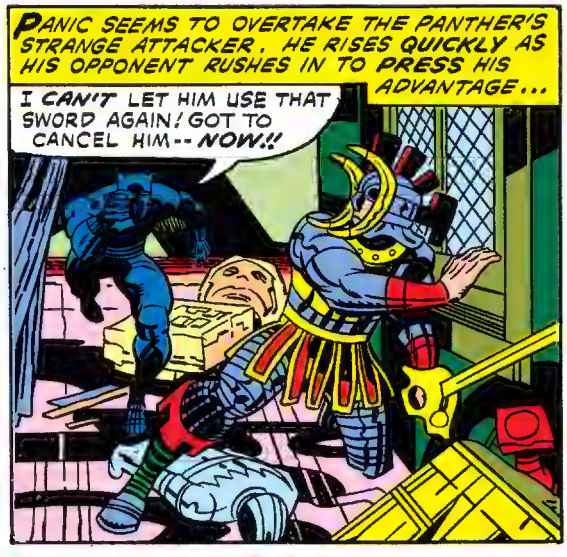

A SINEWY SWORD ARM HACKS AWAY IN PURSUIT OF ITS INTENDED TARGET, BUT...
TAKE COVER, MISTER LITTLE! THE KILLER'S STILL WITH US!
KRUNCH!
WHY, SO HE IS!!

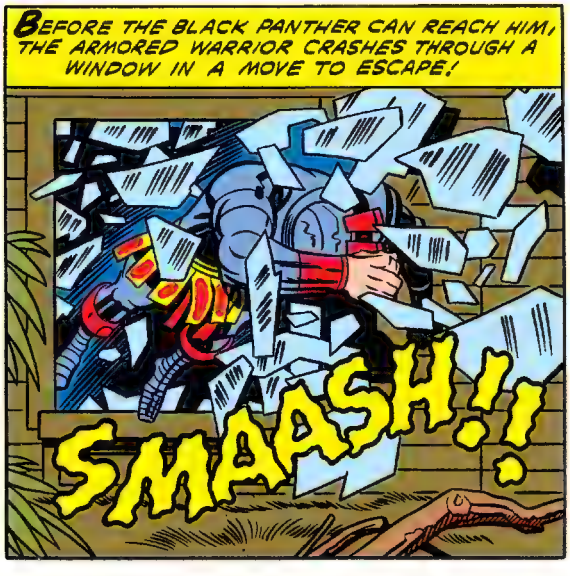
THE BLACK PANTHER'S SUPERB AGILITY KEEPS HIM ALIVE UNTIL HE'S IN POSITION TO COUNTER-ATTACK...
PERHAPS QUEELY FELL EASILY TO YOUR BLADE--
THOK!

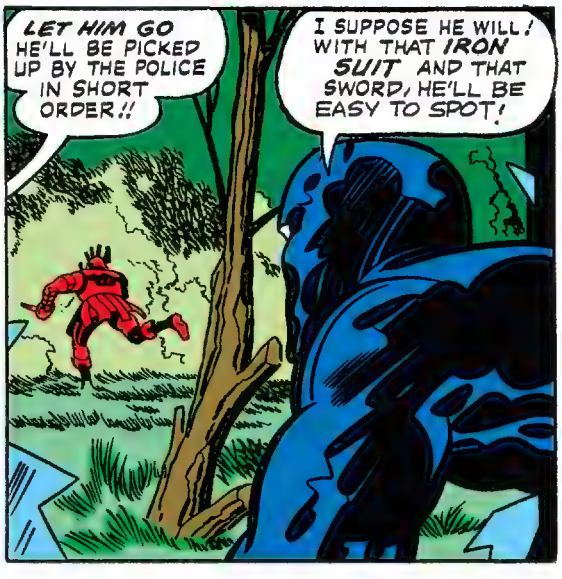
THEN, WITH COBRA-SPEED, THE BLACK PANTHER STRIKES BACK!
--BUT YOU WILL FIND THE PANTHER A MOST UNCOOPERATIVE TARGET!


SPLENDID, PANTHER, SPLENDID! YOUR SKILL IN DEFENDING YOURSELF IS MOST ADMIRABLE!
I'M FORTUNATE TO HAVE YOU AT MY SIDE IN THIS MOMENT OF STRESS!
THANKS A LOT! IF I DON'T PUT THIS KILLER OUT OF ACTION NOW, WE MAY BOTH YET DIE!

KRAK!
UGH! BELTING THAT ARMORED HIDE IS LIKE PUNCHING OUT A BRICK WALL!

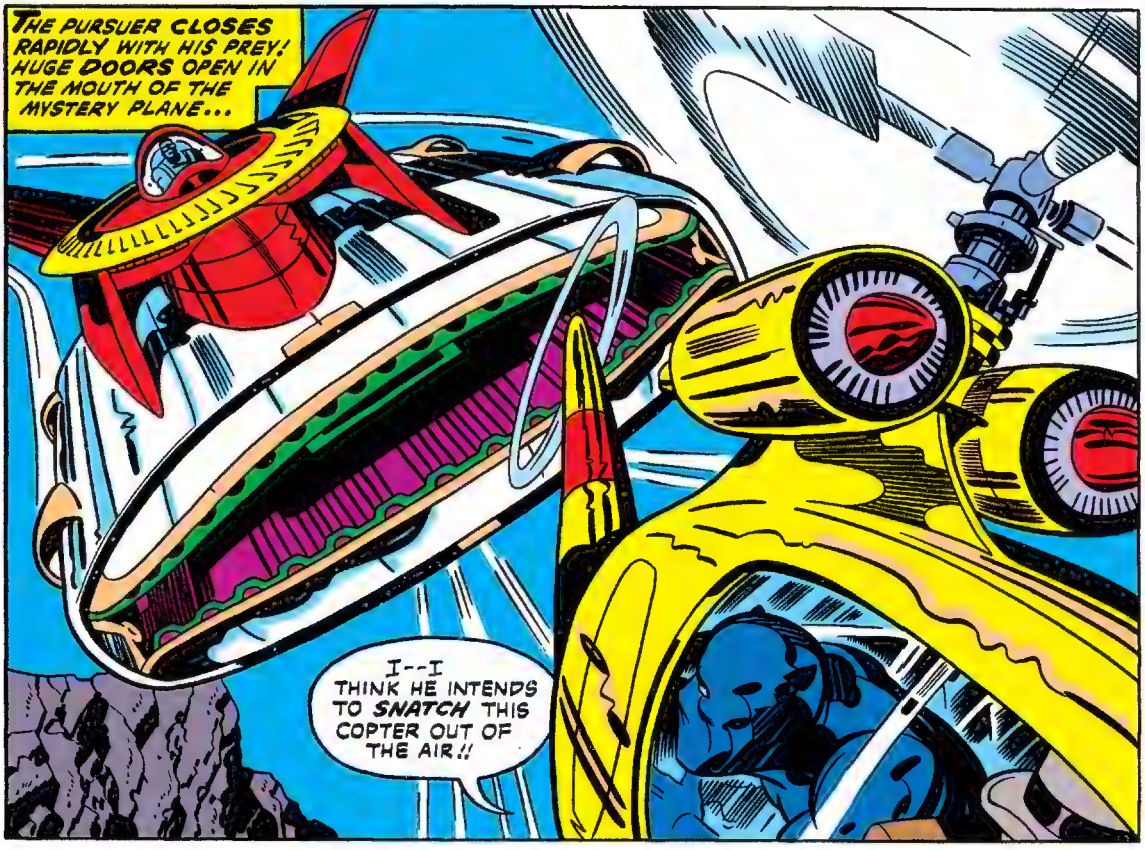

PANIC SEEMS TO OVERTAKE THE PANTHER'S STRANGE ATTACKER, HE RISES QUICKLY AS HIS OPPONENT RUSHES IN TO PRESS HIS ADVANTAGE...
I CAN'T LET HIM USE THAT SWORD AGAIN! GOT TO CANCEL HIM-- NOW!!


BEFORE THE BLACK PANTHER CAN REACH HIM, THE ARMORED WARRIOR CRASHES THROUGH A WINDOW IN A MOVE TO ESCAPE!
SMAASH!!

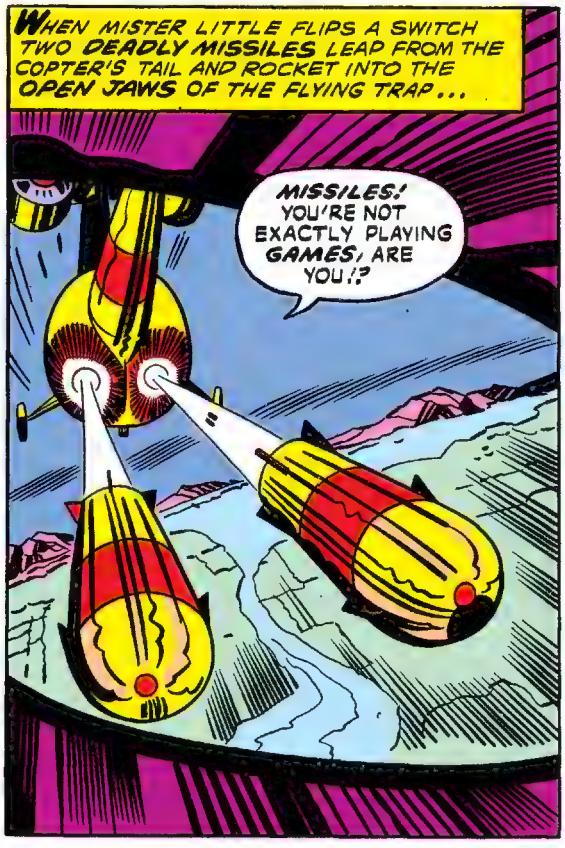

LET HIM GO HE'LL BE PICKED UP BY THE POLICE IN SHORT ORDER!!
I SUPPOSE HE WILL! WITH THAT IRON SUIT AND THAT SWORD, HE'LL BE EASY TO SPOT!

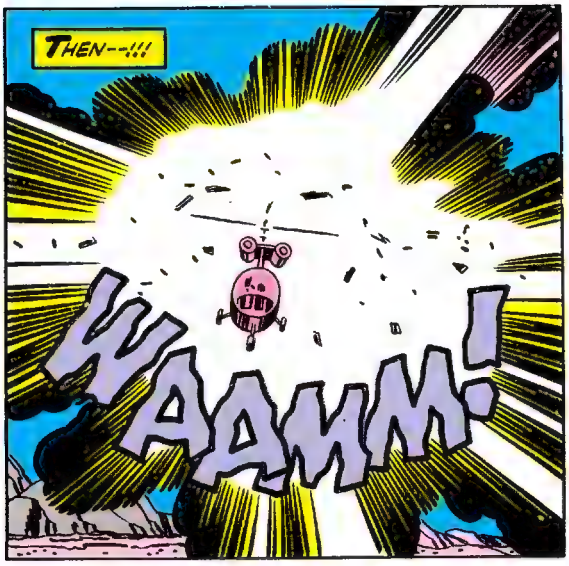
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, MISTER LITTLE? I DIDN'T PURSUE THAT MAN BECAUSE I SENSE THAT HIS CAPTURE IS CERTAIN--BECAUSE HE'S A FRIGHTENED STRANGER AMONG US.
BECAUSE HE'S THE REAL McCOY, MY BOY! A LIVING WARRIOR PLUCKED FROM ANTIQUITY AND TRANSPLANTED THIS CENTURY!
WHAT--!??
I APPLAUD YOUR UNCANNY PERCEPTION! YOU'RE A TRUE GRANDSON OF AZZARI, THE WISE --A MOST AMAZING MAN!
MY GRANDFATHER'S NAME WAS THE MOST HONORED AMONG THE AFRICAN LEADERS OF HIS TIME...IF YOUR LETTER HADN'T MENTIONED HIS NAME, I'D NEVER HAVE JOINED YOU IN THIS WILD CAPER!
YOUR GRANDFATHER ONCE OWNED THIS BRASS FROG!
YOU MEAN--!?
I MEAN THAT HE KNEW IT TO BE WHAT IT TRULY IS--A TIME MACHINE!
HERE! LOOK AT THE FROG THROUGH THIS!
STUNNED INTO SILENCE, THE BLACK PANTHER USES THE EYE-PIECE TO STUDY THE FROG...
UNLIKE ALFRED QUEELY, YOUR ANCESTOR WAS TOO WISE TO TAMPER WITH SUCH A COMPLEX DEVICE!
THE STRANGE FORCES AND MINIATURE MECHANISMS THAT POWER THE FROG ARE QUICKLY REVEALED...
IT'S CERTAINLY COMPLEX, I'LL AGREE TO THAT!
AZZARI BURIED THE FROG, BUT IT WAS EXHUMED BY ANOTHER-- AND THUS CONTINUED ITS CHAIN OF DISASTERS TO THIS DAY!

THOSE WHO TAMPER WITH THE FROG ARE KILLED -- BY WHATEVER SPRINGS FROM THE OPEN DOOR OF TIME!
IT'S TOO BAD THAT WE DIDN'T TRACK HIM DOWN BEFORE THIS HAPPENED!
QUEELY LEARNED THAT-- TOO LATE!
MOMENTS LATER, THE BLACK PANTHER ACCOMPANIES MISTER LITTLE TO A JET-COPTER PARKED NEARBY, AND THEY LEAVE THE AREA...
NOW THAT WE'VE PHONED THE POLICE ABOUT QUEELY, WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY!
I'M NOT SURE THAT I WANT TO GO YOUR WAY.
BUT YOU MUST SEE THIS THROUGH, MY FRIEND! I DON'T INTEND TO KEEP THE BRASS FROG. IT MUST BE RETURNED TO ITS ORIGINAL RESTING PLACE--KING SOLOMON'S BURIAL CHAMBER!!
W-WHAT!? YOU'VE GONE CRAZY, MISTER LITTLE! AN ARMY OF FOOLS HAS DIED FOLLOWING THAT FAIRY TALE!!
YOU MAY AS WELL LOOK FOR CAMELOT-- OR THE LOST AZTEC CITY OF GOLD!!
KING SOLOMON WAS NOT A MYTH. HE LIVED A FABULOUS LIFE-- AND ACCUMULATED FANTASTIC TREASURES! THE BRASS FROG WAS AMONG THEM.
SUDDENLY, A STRANGE AIRCRAFT SOARS INTO VIEW...
PILOT TO BASE. I'VE SPOTTED MISTER LITTLE'S COPTER...ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SCOOP HIM UP!
BY ALL THE DEVILS OF THE PIT! WE'VE BEEN JOINED BY SOME INFAMOUS COMPANY!
I'VE NEVER SEEN AN AIRCRAFT LIKE THAT BEFORE! WHO DOES IT BELONG TO?

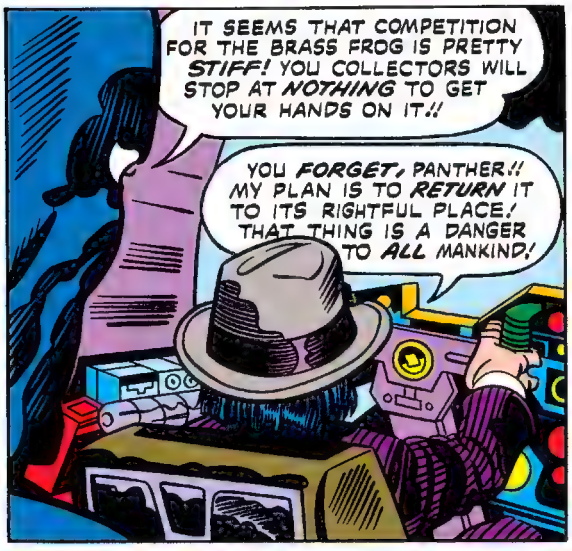

THE PURSUER CLOSES RAPIDLY WITH HIS PREY! HUGE DOORS OPEN IN THE MOUTH OF THE MYSTERY PLANE...
I--I THINK HE INTENDS TO SNATCH THIS COPTER OUT OF THE AIR!!

IF WE DON'T PUT SOME FAST MILEAGE BETWEEN US AND THAT TIN SHARK, YOU CAN POSTPONE YOUR TRIP TO KING SOLOMON'S TOMB!
HOW ABOUT IT, MISTER LITTLE!?
NEVER FEAR, PANTHER! IN MY DEALINGS WITH COMPETITORS I'VE LEARNED TO PREPARE FOR ANY CONTINGENCY!
KLIK!


WHEN MISTER LITTLE FLIPS A SWITCH TWO DEADLY MISSILES LEAP FROM THE COPTER'S TAIL AND ROCKET INTO THE OPEN JAWS OF THE FLYING TRAP...
MISSILES! YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY PLAYING GAMES, ARE YOU!?

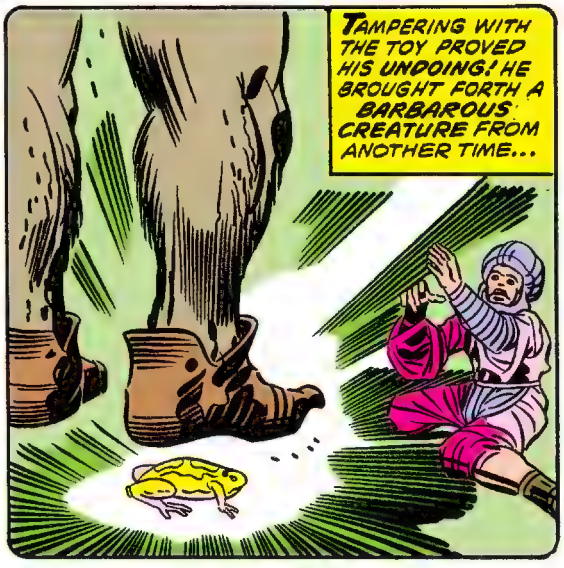

THEN--!!!
WAAMM!

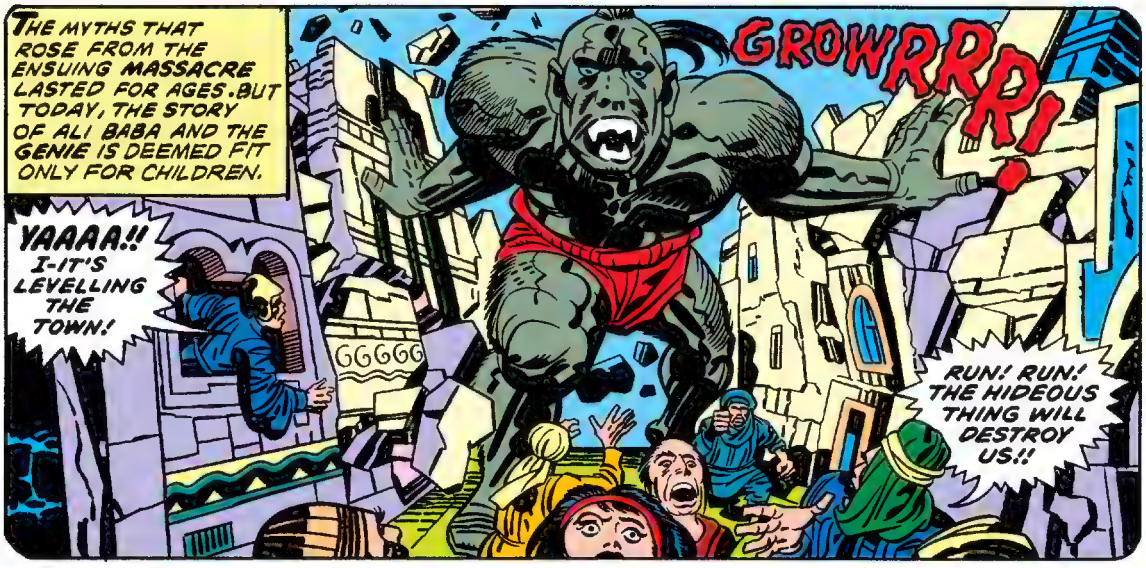
HE'S BEEN BLOWN TO BITS!! THE BLAST ALMOST TOOK US WITH HIM! I'M SURPRISED THAT YOUR COPTER STILL HAS ALL ITS RIVETS!!
IT'S A STURDY CRAFT, I ASSURE YOU! ABNER LITTLE'S EQUIPMENT IS UNEQUALLED FOR QUALITY!

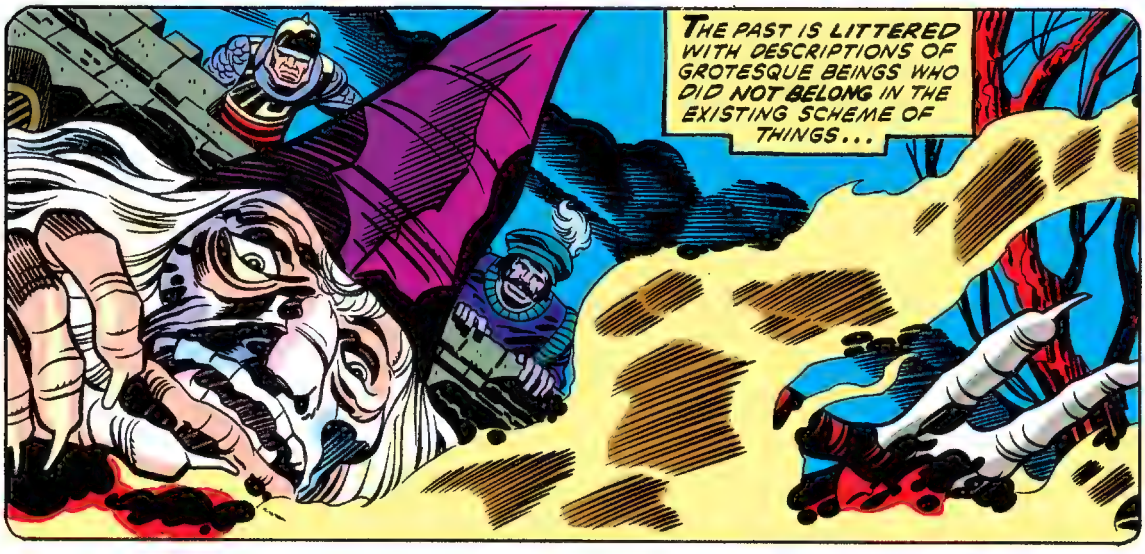

IT SEEMS THAT COMPETITION FOR THE BRASS FROG IS PRETTY STIFF! YOU COLLECTORS WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO GET YOUR HANDS ON IT!!
YOU FORGET, PANTHER!! MY PLAN IS TO RETURN IT TO ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE! THAT THING IS A DANGER TO ALL MANKIND!

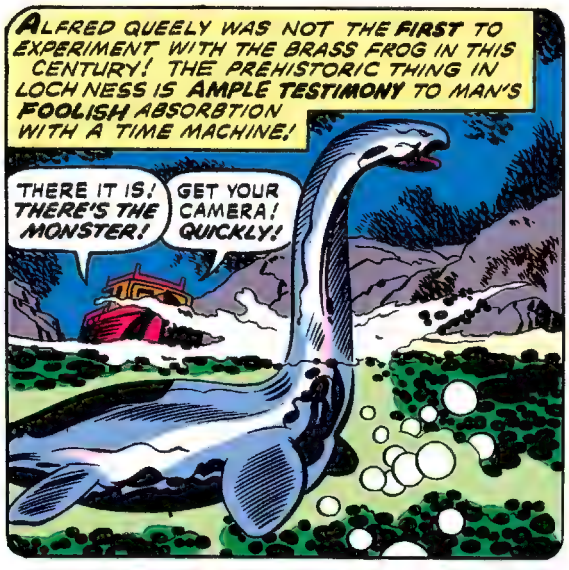
WHO CREATED THE FROG IS NOT KNOWN. HE'S LOST TO HISTORY--LIKE THE INVENTOR OF THE WHEEL. BUT KING SOLOMON RECEIVED THE BRASS FROG AS A ROYAL GIFT--AND IT'S PLAGUED US EVER SINCE!

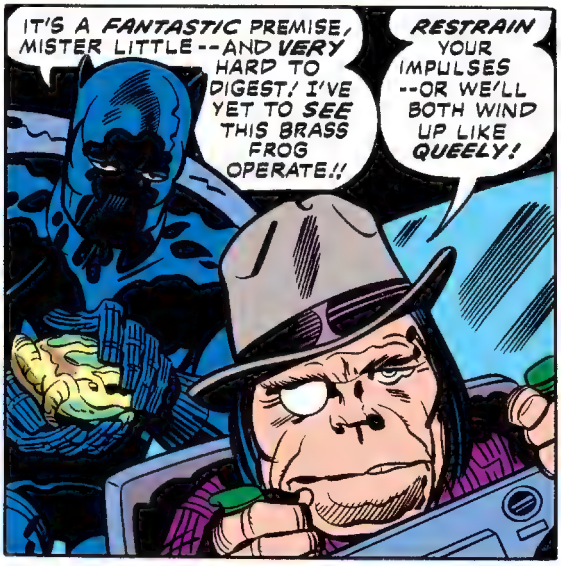
THE FIRST GROUP OF THIEVES TO RIFLE KING SOLOMON'S TOMB FOUND CHESTS FILLED WITH TREASURE... BUT THE YOUNGEST OF THE LOT ALSO FOUND THE BRASS FROG...
HAHAHAHAH! BABA BUSIES HIMSELF WITH CURIOUSITIES AND SPURNS THE JEWELS!
IT IS A STRANGE OBJECT! A--TOY, PERHAPS!

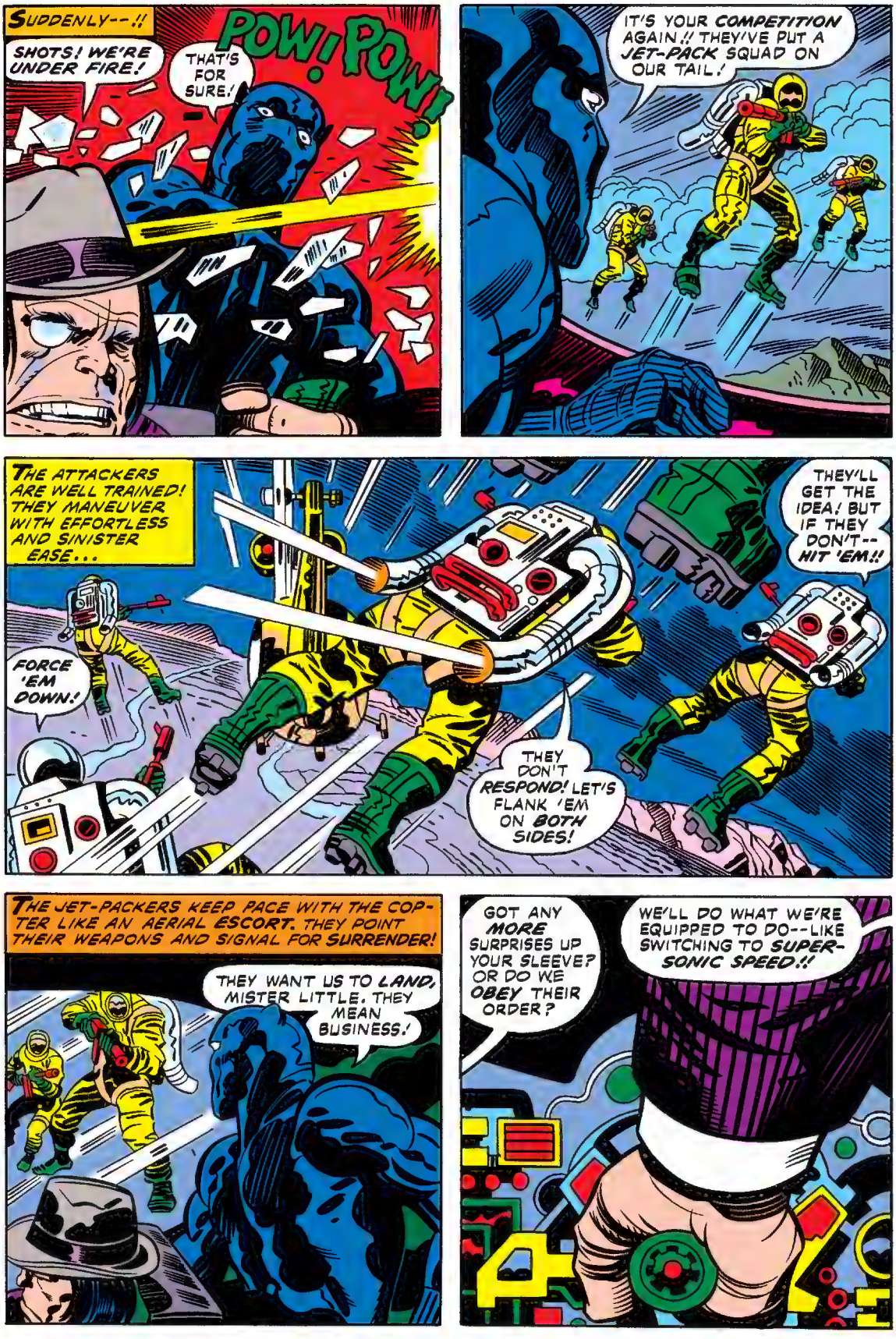

TAMPERING WITH THE TOY PROVED HIS UNDOING! HE BROUGHT FORTH A BARBAROUS CREATURE FROM ANOTHER TIME...

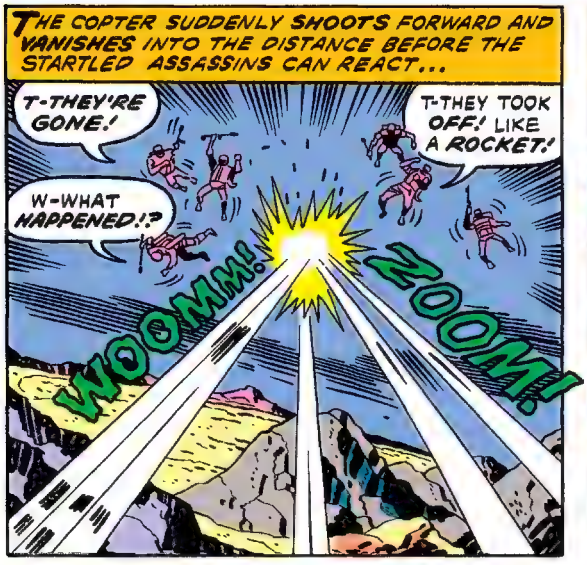

THE MYTHS THAT ROSE FROM THE ENSUING MASSACRE LASTED FOR AGES. BUT TODAY, THE STORY OF ALI BABA AND THE GENIE IS DEEMED FIT ONLY FOR CHILDREN.
GROWRRR!
YAAAA!! I-IT'S LEVELLING THE TOWN!
RUN! RUN! THE HIDEOUS THING WILL DESTROY US!!

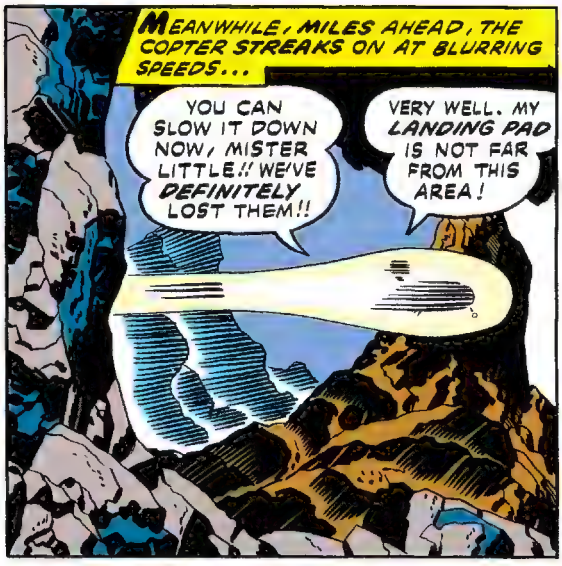

THE PAST IS LITTERED WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF GROTESQUE BEINGS WHO DID NOT BELONG IN THE EXISTING SCHEME OF THINGS...

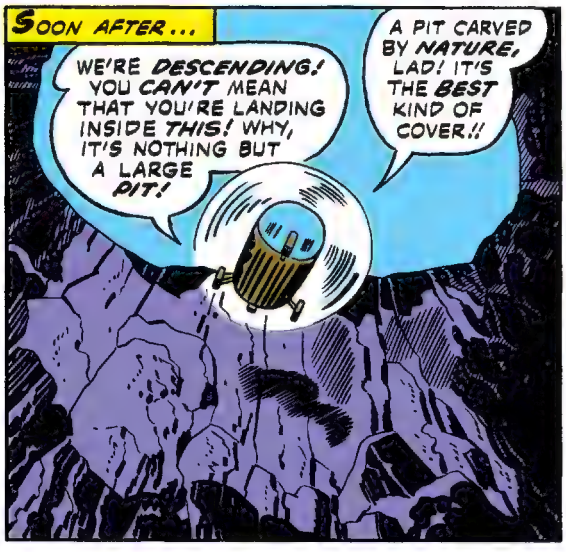

ALFRED QUEELY WAS NOT THE FIRST TO EXPERIMENT WITH THE BRASS FROG IN THIS CENTURY! THE PREHISTORIC THING IN LOCH NESS IS AMPLE TESTIMONY TO MAN'S FOOLISH ABSORBTION WITH A TIME MACHINE!
THERE IT IS! THERE'S THE MONSTER!
GET YOUR CAMERA! QUICKLY!

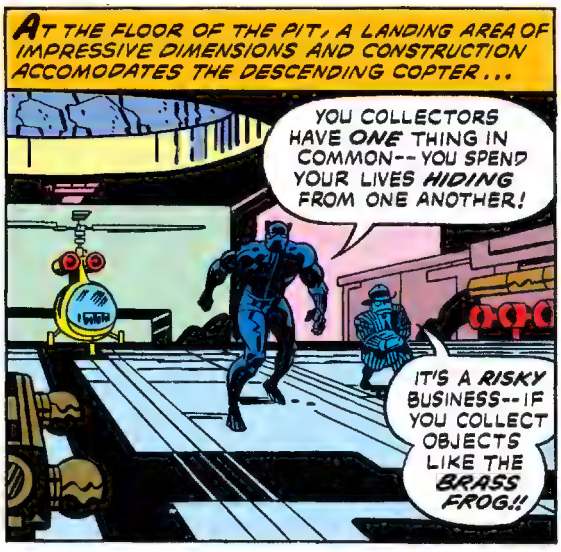

IT'S A FANTASTIC PREMISE, MISTER LITTLE--AND VERY HARD TO DIGEST! I'VE YET TO SEE THIS BRASS FROG OPERATE!!
RESTRAIN YOUR IMPULSES --OR WE'LL BOTH WIND UP LIKE QUEELY!


SUDDENLY--!!
SHOTS! WE'RE UNDER FIRE!
THAT'S FOR SURE!
POW! POW!
IT'S YOUR COMPETITION AGAIN!! THEY'VE PUT A JET-PACK SQUAD ON OUR TAIL!
THE ATTACKERS ARE WELL TRAINED! THEY MANEUVER WITH EFFORTLESS AND SINISTER EASE...
THEY'LL GET THE IDEA! BUT IF THEY DON'T-- HIT 'EM!!
FORCE 'EM DOWN!
THEY DON'T RESPOND! LET'S FLANK 'EM ON BOTH SIDES!
THE JET-PACKERS KEEP PACE WITH THE COPTER LIKE AN AERIAL ESCORT. THEY POINT THEIR WEAPONS AND SIGNAL FOR SURRENDER!
THEY WANT US TO LAND, MISTER LITTLE. THEY MEAN BUSINESS!
GOT ANY MORE SURPRISES UP YOUR SLEEVE? OR DO WE OBEY THEIR ORDER?
WE'LL DO WHAT WE'RE EQUIPPED TO DO--LIKE SWITCHING TO SUPER-SONIC SPEED!!

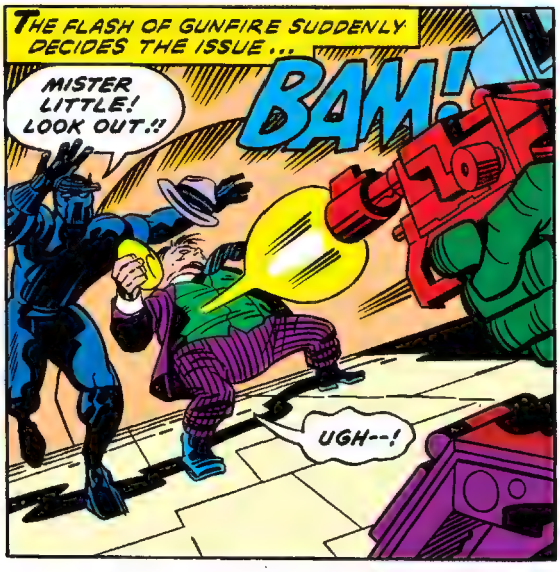

THE COPTER SUDDENLY SHOOTS FORWARD AND VANISHES INTO THE DISTANCE BEFORE THE STARTLED ASSASSINS CAN REACT...
T-THEY'RE GONE!
T-THEY TOOK OFF! LIKE A ROCKET!
W-WHAT HAPPENED!?
WOOMM!
ZOOM!

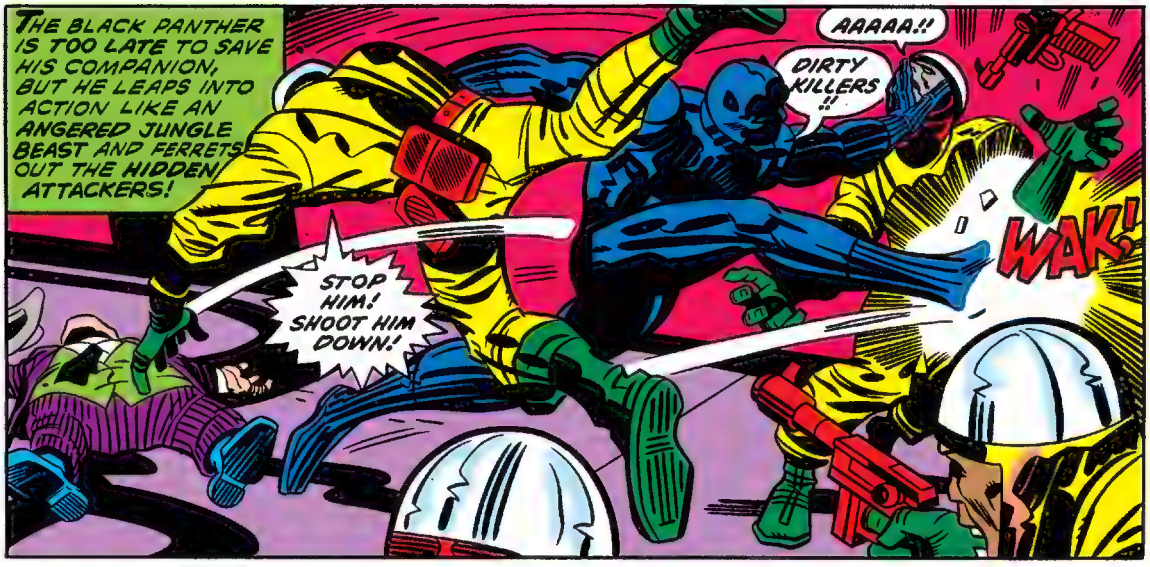

MEANWHILE, MILES AHEAD, THE COPTER STREAKS ON AT BLURRING SPEEDS...
YOU CAN SLOW IT DOWN NOW, MISTER LITTLE!! WE'VE DEFINITELY LOST THEM!!
VERY WELL. MY LANDING PAD IS NOT FAR FROM THIS AREA!

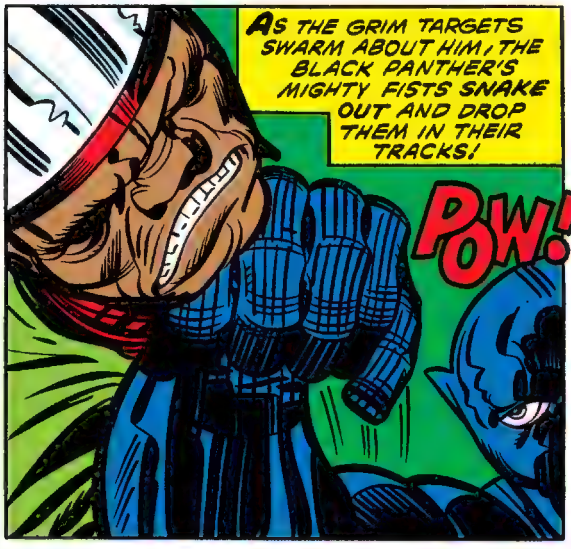

SOON AFTER...
WE'RE DESCENDING! YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT YOU'RE LANDING INSIDE THIS! WHY, IT'S NOTHING BUT A LARGE PIT!
A PIT CARVED BY NATURE, LAD! IT'S THE BEST KIND OF COVER!!


AT THE FLOOR OF THE PIT, A LANDING AREA OF IMPRESSIVE DIMENSIONS AND CONSTRUCTION ACCOMODATES THE DESCENDING COPTER...
YOU COLLECTORS HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON--YOU SPEND YOUR LIVES HIDING FROM ONE ANOTHER!
IT'S A RISKY BUSINESS--IF YOU COLLECT OBJECTS LIKE THE BRASS FROG!!

HOLD IT! I-I DETECT ANOTHER PRESENCE HERE. IN FACT, THERE ARE MANY OTHERS.
IMPOSSIBLE!! THIS PLACE IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND--YET, PRINCESS ZANDA MIGHT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO--

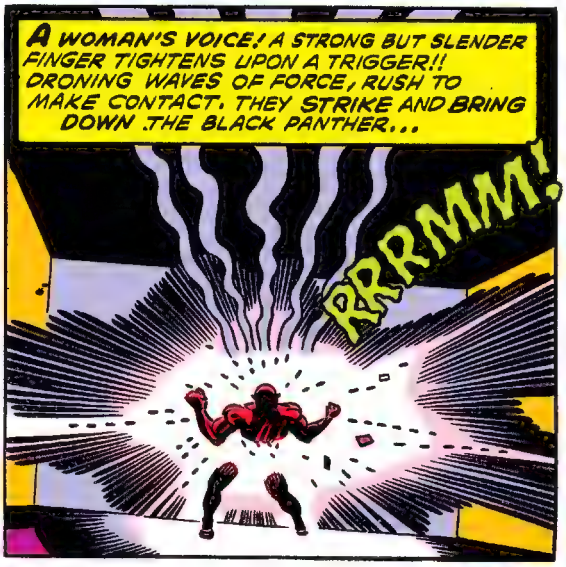

THE FLASH OF GUNFIRE SUDDENLY DECIDES THE ISSUE...
MISTER LITTLE! LOOK OUT.!!
BAM!
UGH--!


THE BLACK PANTHER IS TOO LATE TO SAVE HIS COMPANION, BUT HE LEAPS INTO ACTION LIKE AN ANGERED JUNGLE BEAST AND FERRETS OUT THE HIDDEN ATTACKERS!
AAAAA!!
DIRTY KILLERS !!
STOP HIM! SHOOT HIM DOWN!
WAK!


AS THE GRIM TARGETS SWARM ABOUT HIM, THE BLACK PANTHER'S MIGHTY FISTS SNAKE OUT AND DROP THEM IN THEIR TRACKS!
POW!

KRAK!
SMASH!

STAND ASIDE, YOU FUMBLING CLOWNS! MUST I CONTINUALLY DO YOUR WORK FOR YOU!!?


A WOMAN'S VOICE! A STRONG BUT SLENDER FINGER TIGHTENS UPON A TRIGGER!! DRONING WAVES OF FORCE, RUSH TO MAKE CONTACT. THEY STRIKE AND BRING DOWN THE BLACK PANTHER...
RRRMM!

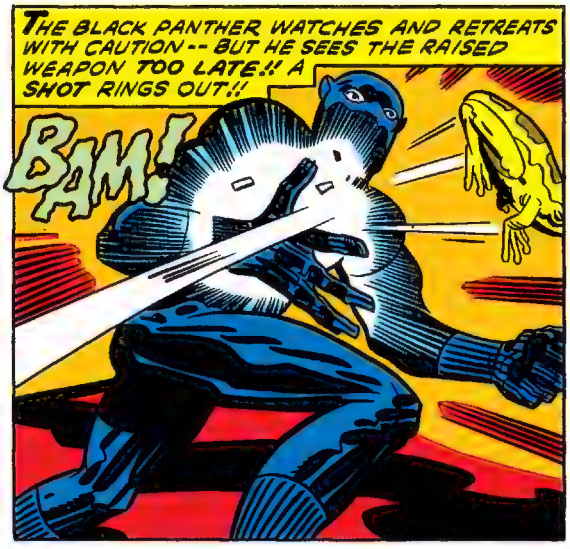
EVERY NERVE IN THE PANTHER'S BODY BECOMES A CENTER OF PAIN! HE SCREAMS ONCE AND COLLAPSES IN A LIMP HEAP. THEN HIS VICTORIOUS ADVERSARY MAKES HER APPEARANCE...
THIS A DAY OF TRIUMPH, PRINCESS ZANDA! YOU'VE CONQUERED YOUR ENEMIES AND WON THIS COVETED PRIZE!!
THE BRASS FROG IS YOURS!
SERVILE BUFFOON! YOU'RE FORTUNATE THAT I DIDN'T TURN MY NERVE WAVES ON THE LOT OF YOU!
GIVE ME THAT ARTIFACT!
MISTER LITTLE IS DEAD, MISTRESS. SHALL WE FINISH THE BLACK PANTHER AS WELL??
NO, YOU FOOL! THE PRINCESS HAS NEED OF HIM FOR HER PLANS!

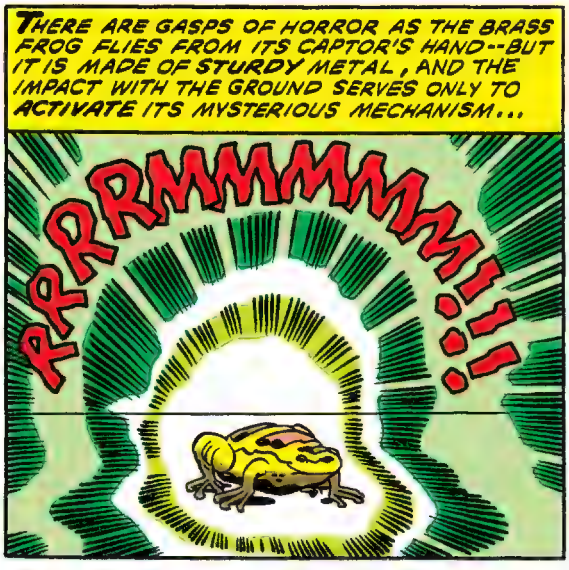
AT LAST IT'S MINE! THE DOORWAY TO TIME ITSELF --! COMPACT AND SECURE WITHIN THIS HUMBLE OBJECT!
BUT IT CANNOT BE CONTROLLED, HIGHNESS! IT'S DANGEROUS TO USE!!
SOMEWHERE IN THE TOMB OF KING SOLOMON LIES THE CONTROL CODE!
IS IT TRUE THAT THE PANTHER CAN LEAD US TO IT, PRINCESS?
WE CAN MAKE HIM TALK, HIGHNESS! HE'S WEAK-- BUT HE CAN TALK!!
GOT-NOTHING-TO-SAY!! YOU COLLECTORS CAN-GO-TO--
DEFIANCE IS FRUITLESS! IT WILL ONLY EARN YOU ANOTHER JOLT TO YOUR NERVES!
WHY FIGHT ME, PANTHER? YOU'VE WITNESSED THE POWER AT MY COMMAND. THOUGH YOU ELUDED CAPTURE IN THE AIR, MY MERCENARIES HAD ALREADY TRACKED YOU HERE...
YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE POWER OF PRINCESS ZANDA!
AFTER ALL, YOU WERE WILLING TO JOIN MISTER LITTLE! WHY NOT HELP ME INSTEAD!!?
YOU'RE A COLD-BLOODED KILLER!!!
IDIOT! DO YOU THINK THAT LITTLE'S GOAL WAS ANY DIFFERENT THAN MINE!?
HE WANTED THE CONTROL CODE THAT WILL REGULATE THE FORCES IN THIS ARTIFACT!
ONCE YOU'D FOUND IT, MISTER LITTLE WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU!

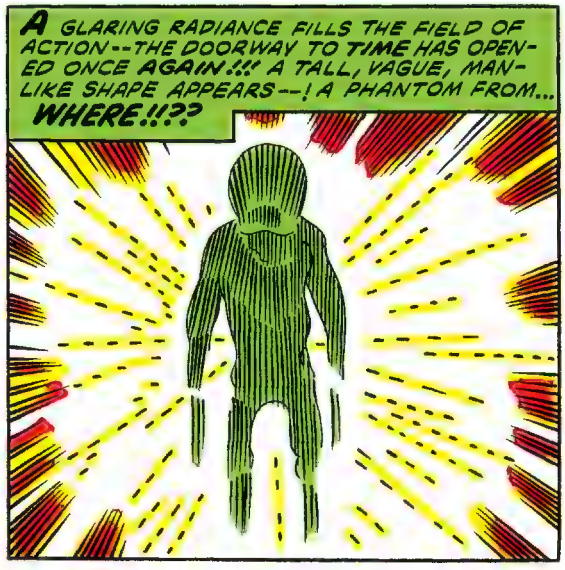
NO DEAL, PRINCESS!! FIND ANOTHER TRAVEL GUIDE!!
THE FROG!! HE KICKED THE FROG FROM MY HANDS!
POK!

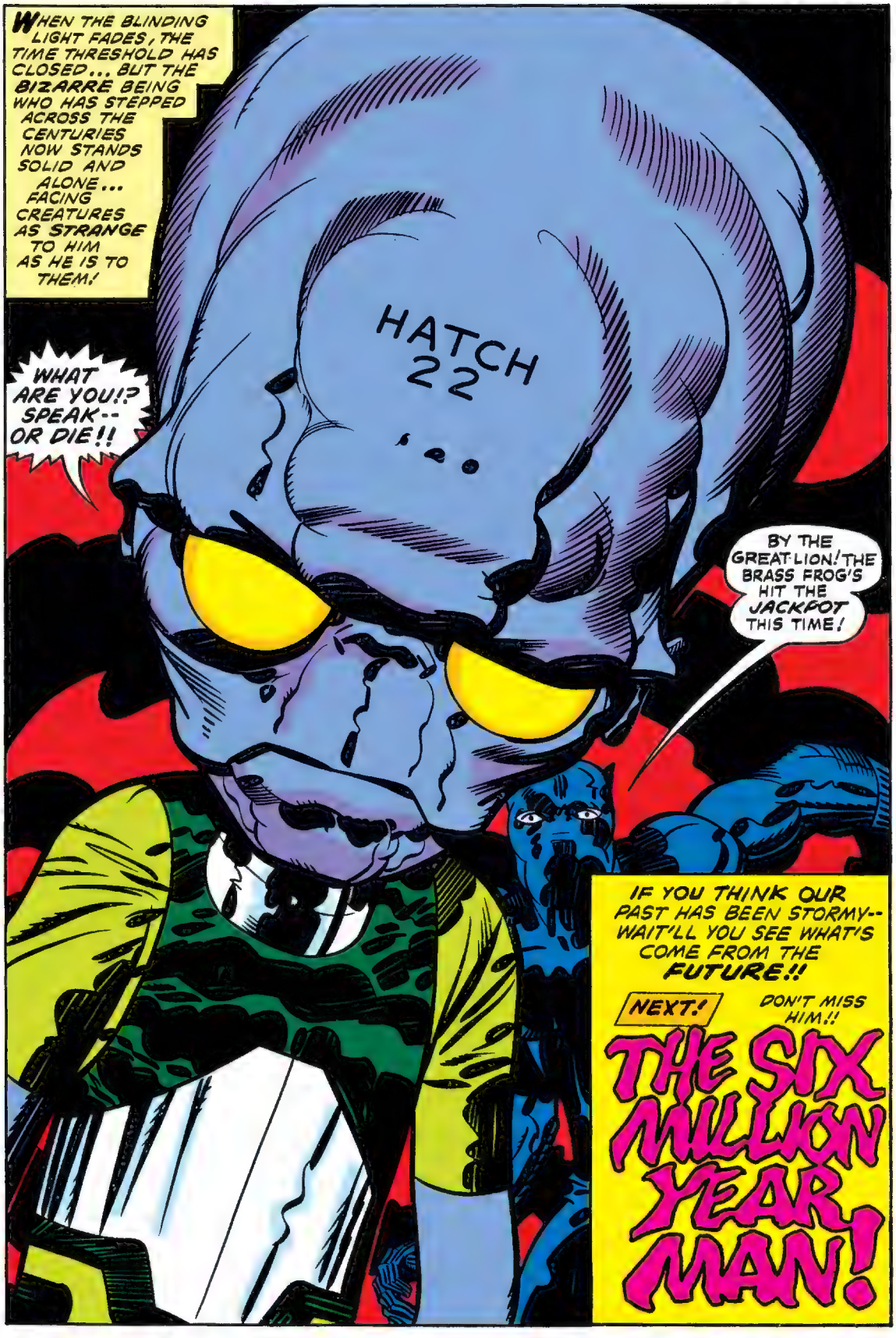
KILL THE RASH FOOL!
TRY IT-- AND I'LL SMASH THIS THING!
HE'S SEIZED THE FROG!!
H-HE'LL CARRY OUT HIS THREAT!

HE CAN'T KEEP HIS EYE ON ALL OF US!! PICK HIM OFF WITH A CAREFUL SHOT!!
HE MOVES LIKE A JUNGLE CAT, HIGHNESS, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST!


THE BLACK PANTHER WATCHES AND RETREATS WITH CAUTION -- BUT HE SEES THE RAISED WEAPON TOO LATE!! A SHOT RINGS OUT!!
BAM!


THERE ARE GASPS OF HORROR AS THE BRASS FROG FLIES FROM ITS CAPTOR'S HAND--BUT IT IS MADE OF STURDY METAL, AND THE IMPACT WITH THE GROUND SERVES ONLY TO ACTIVATE ITS MYSTERIOUS MECHANISM...
RRRMMMMM!!!!


A GLARING RADIANCE FILLS THE FIELD OF ACTION--THE DOORWAY TO TIME HAS OPENED ONCE AGAIN!!! A TALL, VAGUE, MAN-LIKE SHAPE APPEARS--! A PHANTOM FROM... WHERE!!??


WHEN THE BLINDING LIGHT FADES, THE TIME THRESHOLD HAS CLOSED... BUT THE BIZARRE BEING WHO HAS STEPPED ACROSS THE CENTURIES NOW STANDS SOLID AND ALONE... FACING CREATURES AS STRANGE TO HIM AS HE IS TO THEM!
HATCH 22 ...
WHAT ARE YOU!? SPEAK-- OR DIE!!
BY THE GREAT LION! THE BRASS FROG'S HIT THE JACKPOT THIS TIME!
IF YOU THINK OUR PAST HAS BEEN STORMY-- WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT'S COME FROM THE FUTURE!!
NEXT!
DON'T MISS HIM!!
THE SIX MILLION YEAR MAN!

BLACK PANTHER
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2ND BIG ISSUE! THE ALL-NEW, ALL-EXCITING
BLACK PANTHER
HE COMES FROM THE FUTURE--WITH THE POWER TO DESTROY THE PRESENT!
THE SIX-MILLION YEAR MAN!
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With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN & DRAWN BY: JACK KIRBY | INKED & LETTERED BY: MIKE ROYER | COLORED BY: PETRA GOLDBERG | CONSULTING EDITOR: ARCHIE GOODWIN

COMIC BOOK FANS ARE PUSSY CATS COMPARED TO THE INSATIABLE COLLECTORS WHO ROAM THIS WORLD LIKE PREDATORS IN SEARCH OF PRICELESS AND FORBIDDEN ARTIFACTS! WHEN THE BLACK PANTHER BECOMES INVOLVED WITH THIS BAND OF HUMAN SHARKS, HE FINDS HIMSELF A HORRIFIED WITNESS, NOT ONLY TO DEATH AND DESTRUCTION, BUT TO THE RUTHLESS TAMPERING WITH OBJECTS THAT COULD WELL ENDANGER THE WHOLE CIVILIZED WORLD!

LIKE A ONE-WAY TIME MACHINE!! LIKE--

THE SIX-MILLION YEAR MAN

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IT STEPPED OUT OF AN **ACTIVATED** TIME MACHINE TO GLARE AT THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WITH LARGE BLAZING EYES. THEN, SURROUNDED BY STUPIFIED ONLOOKERS, THIS **INCREDIBLE** BEING TURNED LOOSE ITS POWERS! THE RESULT HAS BEEN **CHAOS** AND **PANIC!**

I'D LIKE TO SEE HOW YOUR MERCENARIES DEAL WITH ***THIS*** KIND OF FOE, ***PRINCESS ZANDA!!***

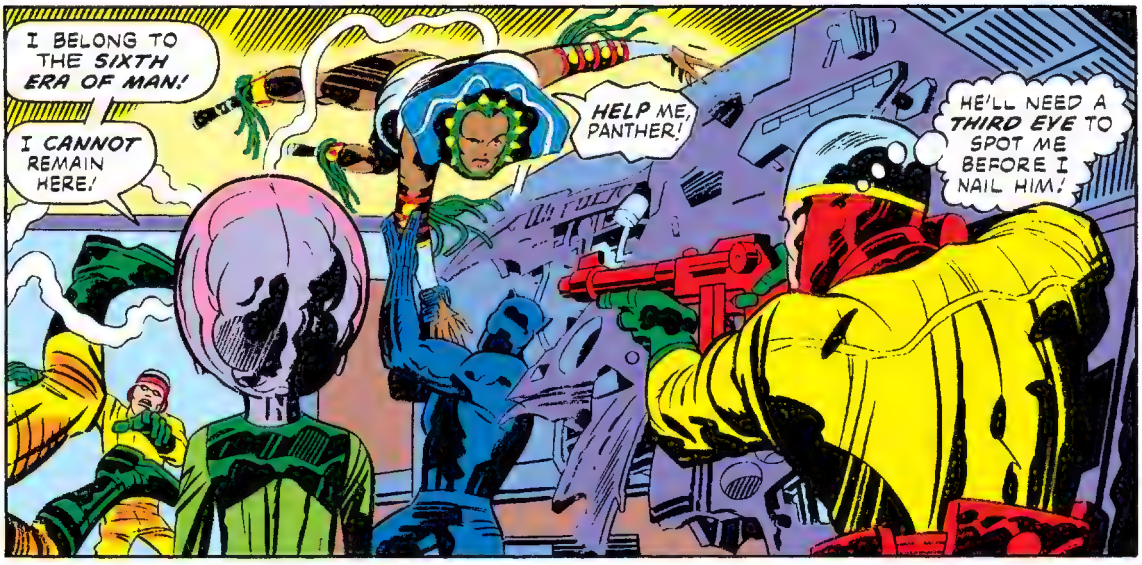
HE CAN SOMEHOW USE ***POWERFUL*** MAGNETIC FORCES TO PULL US ABOUT THIS CHAMBER-- LIKE ***MARIONETTES!***

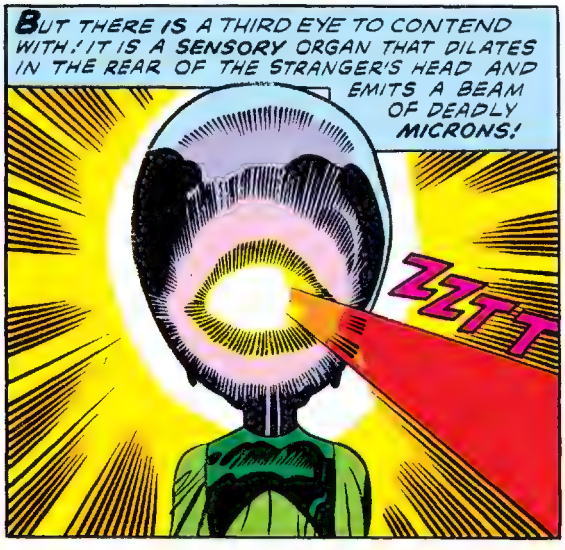
STOP HIM, YOU FOOLS!! EARN YOUR PAY!!

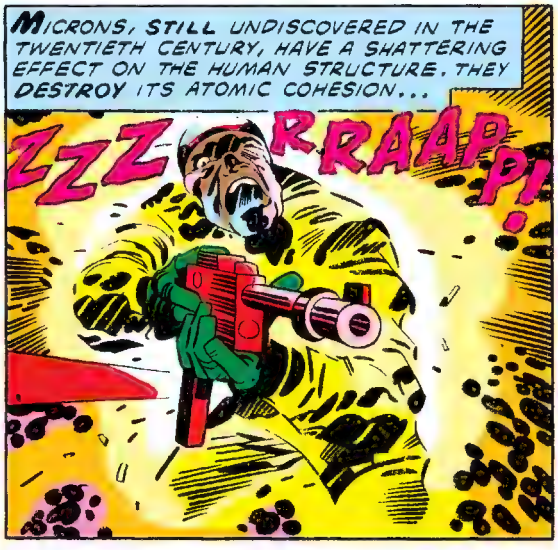
HATCH 22

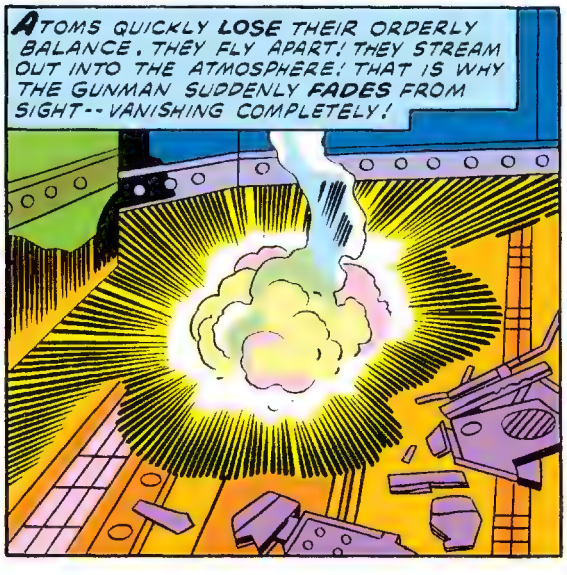
MINDLESS CREATURES! YOU HAVE ***REMOVED*** ME FROM THE HATCH! ***I MUST RETURN TO THE HATCH!!***

THIS INVISIBLE FORCE ***IS TOO*** MUCH FOR US! IT'S ROBBING US OF OUR ***BALANCE*** AND ***WEAPONS!!***


I BELONG TO THE SIXTH ERA OF MAN!
I CANNOT REMAIN HERE!
HELP ME, PANTHER!
HE'LL NEED A THIRD EYE TO SPOT ME BEFORE I NAIL HIM!


BUT THERE IS A THIRD EYE TO CONTEND WITH! IT IS A SENSORY ORGAN THAT DILATES IN THE REAR OF THE STRANGER'S HEAD AND EMITS A BEAM OF DEADLY MICRONS!
ZZTT


MICRONS, STILL UNDISCOVERED IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, HAVE A SHATTERING EFFECT ON THE HUMAN STRUCTURE. THEY DESTROY ITS ATOMIC COHESION...
ZZZ
RRAAP
PT!

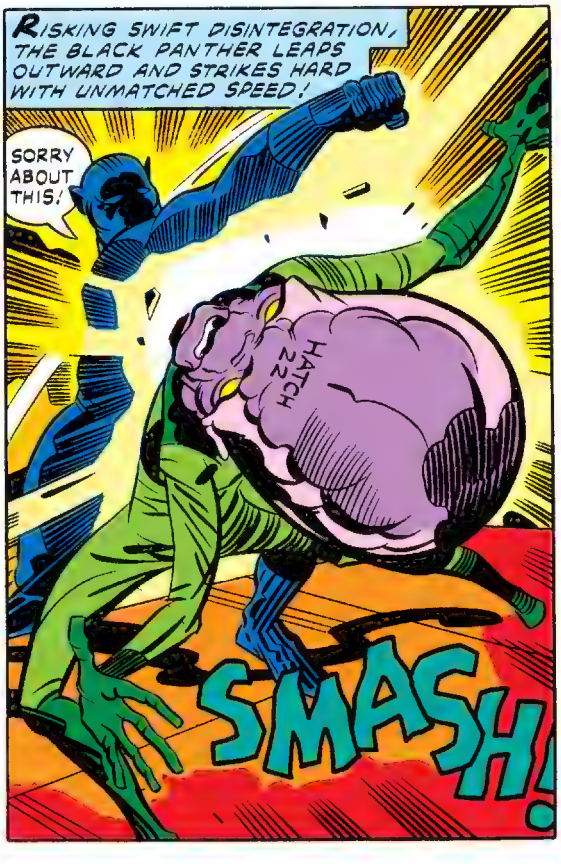

ATOMS QUICKLY LOSE THEIR ORDERLY BALANCE. THEY FLY APART! THEY STREAM OUT INTO THE ATMOSPHERE! THAT IS WHY THE GUNMAN SUDDENLY FADES FROM SIGHT--VANISHING COMPLETELY!

THERE ARE GASPS OF HORROR FROM ALL THOSE WHO WITNESS THE PHENOMENON...
H-HE CAN DISINTEGRATE US! WHAT CAN WE DO?
BLANK OUT YOUR THOUGHTS! THINK OF NOTHING!

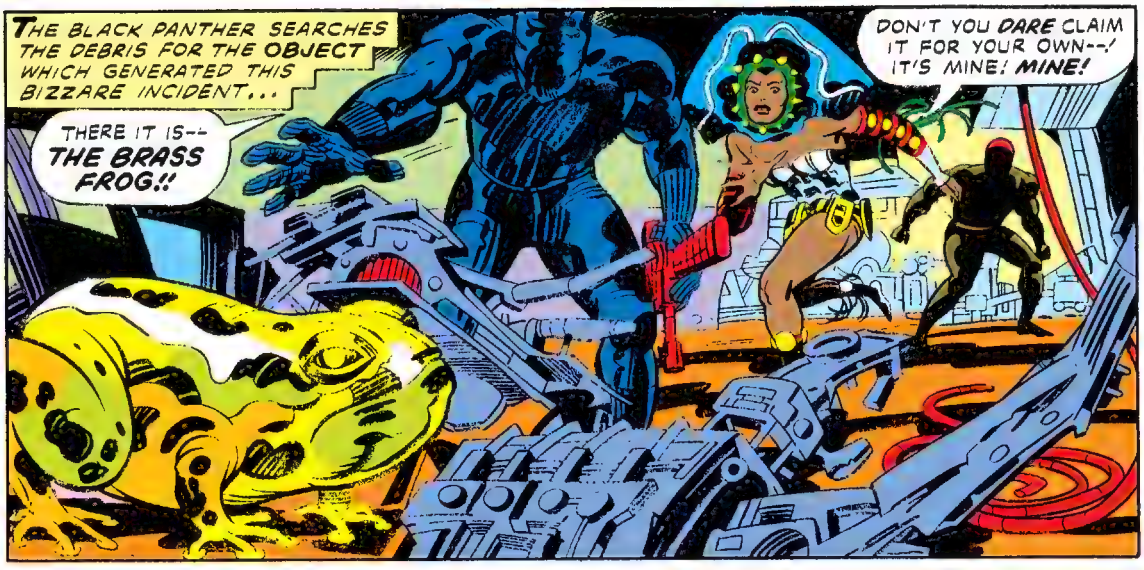
THE BLACK PANTHER DROPS TO HIS HANDS AND KNEES AND MOVES TOWARD THE PUZZLED APPARITION FROM THE DISTANT FUTURE...
HATCH 22
WHY DO YOU DO THUS?
I-I'VE GOT HIS ATTENTION! HE KNOWS THIS IS NOT A HOSTILE MOVE. BUT, HE CAN'T DECIDE WHAT IT MEANS!

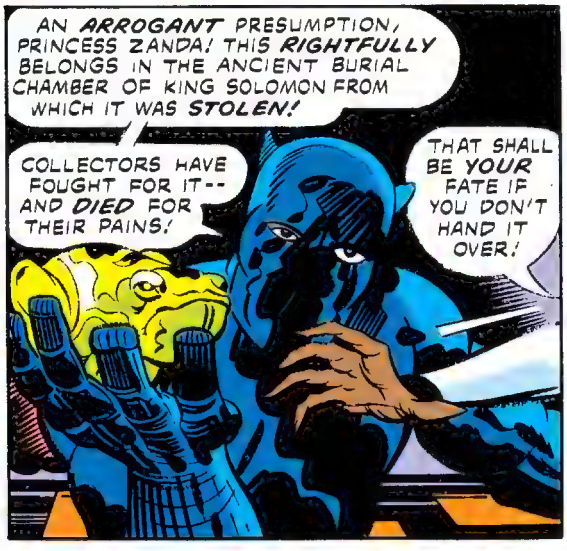
HIS NERVES ARE COILED AND KNOTTED CORDS OF ALARM, AS THE BLACK PANTHER INCHES CAUTIOUSLY FORWARD--CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THIS THING FROM THE UNKNOWN!
WE DO PUSH-UPS HERE. IT'S A SIGN OF FRIEND-SHIP!
--AND SERVILITY!
THAT'S EXTREMELY INTERESTING!

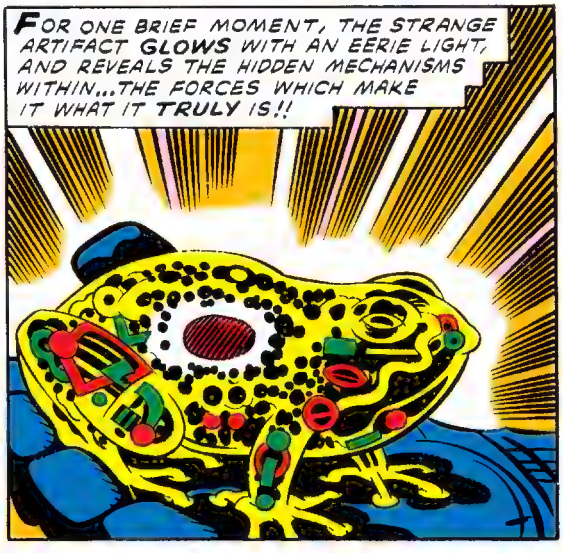
VERY CLEVER FOR ONE SO LIMITED!
YOU'D MAKE A FINE PET. I'LL TAKE YOU WITH ME WHEN I RETURN TO MY HATCH IN THE SIXTH ERA OF MAN!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! I'D BE PLEASED AS PUNCH!
HATCH 22


RISKING SWIFT DISINTEGRATION, THE BLACK PANTHER LEAPS OUTWARD AND STRIKES HARD WITH UNMATCHED SPEED!
SORRY ABOUT THIS!
HATCH 22
SMASH!

Y-YOU DID IT! YOU PUT HIM OUT OF ACTION!
I DON'T FEEL PROUD OF MYSELF! USING DECEPTION IS NOT MY STYLE OF DEALING WITH DANGER!
H-HE COULD HAVE KILLED US ALL!
WHAT IS THAT THING!? IT LOOKS LIKE A MAN, BUT--
IT'S A MAN, ALL RIGHT! --A MAN FROM THE "SIXTH ERA" -- WHEREVER THAT MAY BE IN TIME!
HE'S MAN AS HE WILL BE IN THE FAR DISTANT FUTURE --ALL BRAIN!
THEN, THAT'S THE SPOT TO SHOOT AT!
HE MUST BE ELIMINATED, NOW --BEFORE HE REVIVES AND USES THAT LETHAL BRAIN ON US!
WHA--!
HOLD IT!
HE DIDN'T COME HERE BY CHOICE! IT WAS YOUR MEDDLING THAT BROUGHT HIM HERE!
WAAM!
BLOODTHIRSTY FEMALE! IS THE GUN THE ONLY ANSWER TO YOUR PROBLEMS!?
UGH!
STOP IT, YOU FOOL! STOP IT!
VERY WELL! YOU'VE TAKEN THE GUN! NOW USE IT! USE IT ON HIM BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!!
NO! WE'VE GOT TO FACE THIS AS CIVILIZED HUMAN BEINGS!
YOU MUST BE JOKING! HE LOOKS UPON US AS WE REGARD PET MONKEYS!
IT'S A GAP WE'LL HAVE TO NARROW SOMEHOW! WE'VE GOT TO SEND HIM BACK TO HIS OWN TIME!
AND THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO DO IT!


THE BLACK PANTHER SEARCHES THE DEBRIS FOR THE OBJECT WHICH GENERATED THIS BIZZARE INCIDENT...
THERE IT IS-- THE BRASS FROG!!
DON'T YOU DARE CLAIM IT FOR YOUR OWN--! IT'S MINE! MINE!


AN ARROGANT PRESUMPTION, PRINCESS ZANDA! THIS RIGHTFULLY BELONGS IN THE ANCIENT BURIAL CHAMBER OF KING SOLOMON FROM WHICH IT WAS STOLEN!
COLLECTORS HAVE FOUGHT FOR IT-- AND DIED FOR THEIR PAINS!
THAT SHALL BE YOUR FATE IF YOU DON'T HAND IT OVER!

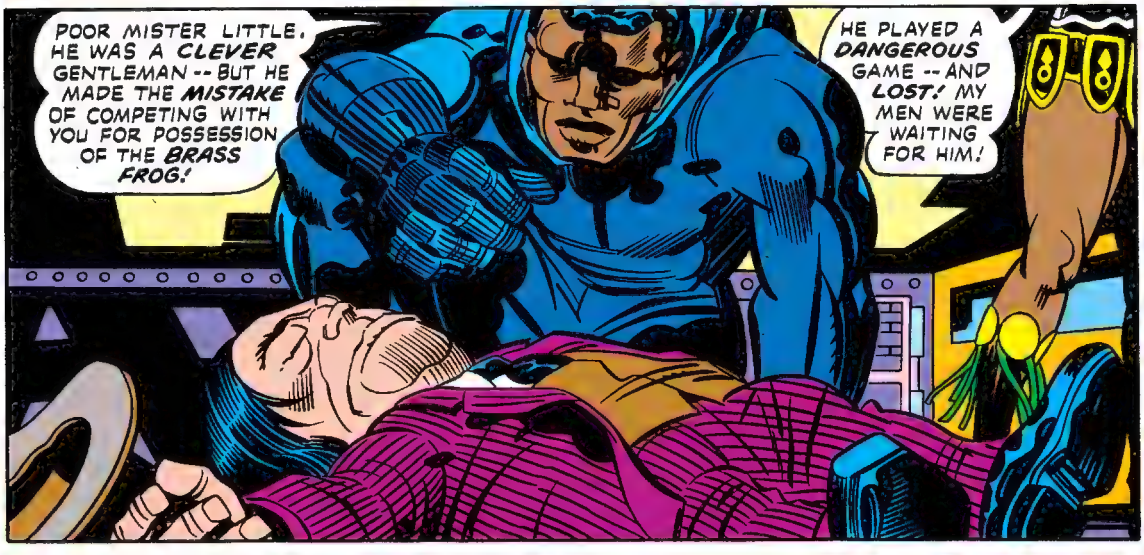

FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT, THE STRANGE ARTIFACT GLOWS WITH AN EERIE LIGHT, AND REVEALS THE HIDDEN MECHANISMS WITHIN...THE FORCES WHICH MAKE IT WHAT IT TRULY IS!!

IT'S A TIME MACHINE, WOMAN! IT BROUGHT US THIS MENACE FROM THE FUTURE -- BUT, IT CANNOT RETURN HIM TO HIS OWN AGE!
I SEE WHAT YOU'RE GETTING AT. YOU INTEND TO OBTAIN THE TWIN TO THIS ARTIFACT!

EXACTLY! THE TWIN TO THIS FROG WILL COMPLETE A TIME MACHINE THAT WORKS BOTH WAYS!
IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE OF RIDDING OURSELVES OF A PRESSING PROBLEM!

IT WOULD BE SIMPLER TO KILL HIM! IT IS STRANGE THAT A MAN WHO BEARS THE PANTHER'S DREADED IMAGE HESITATES TO DESTROY LIFE!
THE PANTHER CULT IS NOT BASED ON DESTRUCTION!
I AM A KING'S SON--RAISED IN A NOBLE TRADITION! MY PEOPLE ARE BUILDERS AND SCHOLARS!

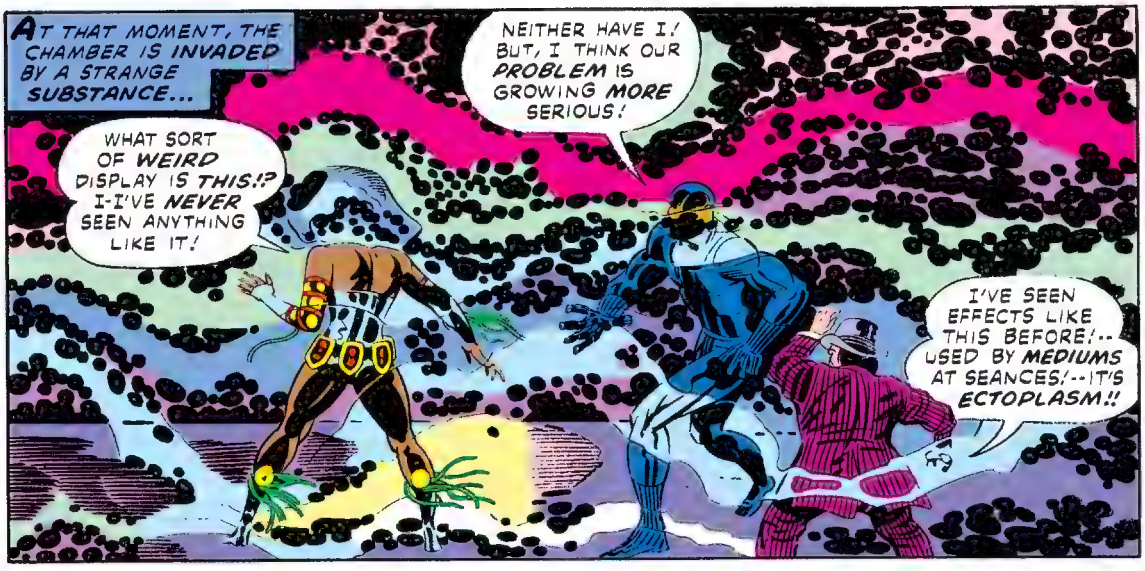
AND HANDSOME, INDEED... YOU'VE AROUSED MY INTEREST. I WOULD DO MUCH TO GAIN YOU AS A WILLING ALLY!
YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH, PRINCESS ZANDA... YOU'VE ROBBED ME OF A FRIEND!


POOR MISTER LITTLE. HE WAS A CLEVER GENTLEMAN -- BUT HE MADE THE MISTAKE OF COMPETING WITH YOU FOR POSSESSION OF THE BRASS FROG!
HE PLAYED A DANGEROUS GAME -- AND LOST! MY MEN WERE WAITING FOR HIM!

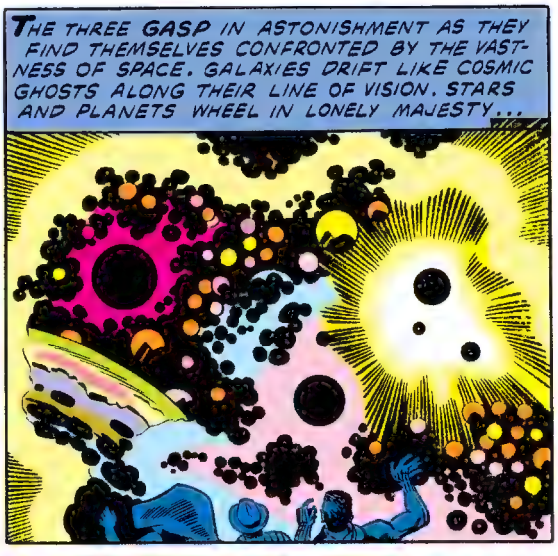
HE WAS A COLLECTOR, AS YOURSELF, BUT, HIS MOTIVES WERE WITHOUT GREED!
WHA--!? THERE IS HARD MATERIAL BENEATH HIS SHIRT!

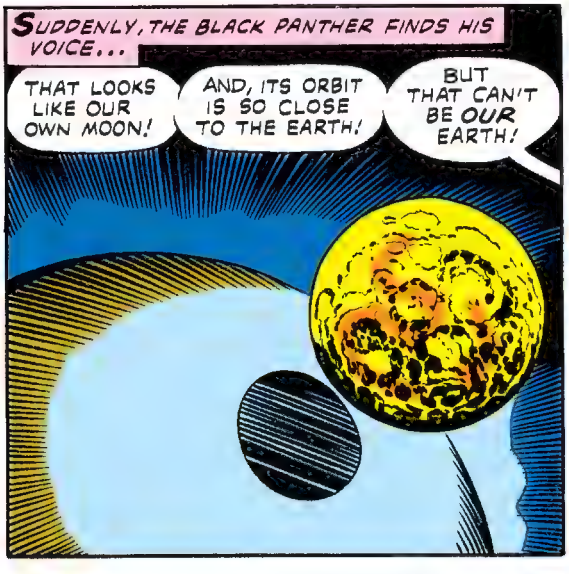
A FAINT SUSPICION TAKES HOLD OF THE BLACK PANTHER -- AND EXPANDS TO A GROWING HOPE AS HE QUICKLY REMOVES THE OUTER LAYERS OF CLOTHING.
HE'S NOT DEAD!! THE BULLET STRUCK HIM -- BUT IT MERELY TOOK THE WIND OUT OF HIM!

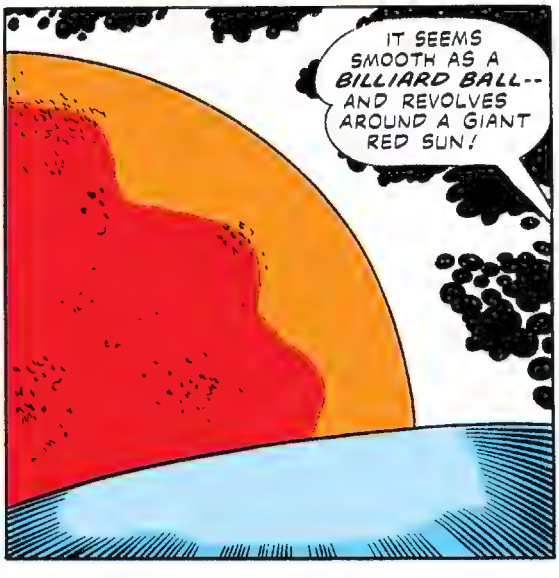
AS EVER, MISTER LITTLE WAS PREPARED FOR ANY CONTINGENCY! HE'S WEARING AN ARMORED VEST!
S-STARS A-AND-- COMETS!
THAT INDESTRUCTABLE RODENT! I THOUGHT I'D SEEN THE LAST OF HIM!
HAHAHAH! GET UP, MISTER LITTLE. YOU'VE SUFFERED NOTHING MORE THAN SLIGHT EMBARRASSMENT!
W-WHERE'S THE BRASS FROG!? OH! WE'VE STILL GOT IT!
H-HOW DID IT GET THERE?! W-WHAT HAPPENED?! I-I--
YOU'LL KNOW ALL IN GOOD TIME, SIR. I WOULD USE THIS MOMENT TO REGAIN YOUR STRENGTH, IF I WERE YOU...
HOW DO YOU FEEL?
I FEEL UNDRESSED, YOU YOUNG JACKANAPES! HAND ME MY JACKET! LOOK AT MY HAT! WHERE'S MY MONOCLE!?
HERE IT IS, YOU INSUFFERABLE LITTLE PIPSQUEAK! MY MEN SHOULD HAVE AIMED AT THIS, INSTEAD OF YOUR CHEST!
PRINCESS ZANDA! SO--YOU AND YOUR SCURRILOUS KNAVES WERE WAITING IN AMBUSH FOR US!
YES, AND I HAD THE BRASS FROG WITHIN MY GRASP! BUT, IT SEEMS THAT FATE HAS CHEATED ME OF THAT, AS WELL!
HOWEVER, THIS DEFEAT IS A TEMPORARY THING, I ASSURE YOU!
THIS COLLECTOR'S SQUABBLE WILL HAVE TO BE PUT ASIDE! IN VIEW OF A GRAVER PROBLEM, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO JOIN FORCES!
WITH ZANDA AND HER CUT-THROATS!? --REALLY!!

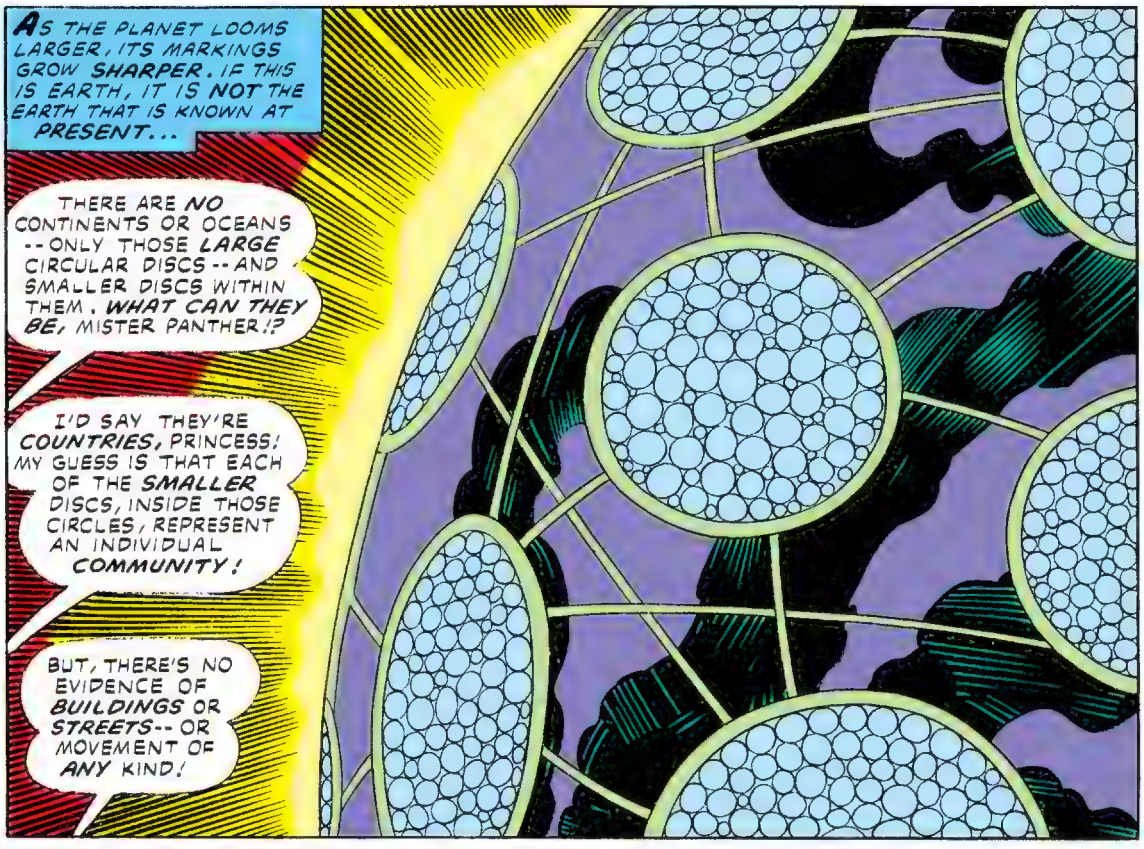

AT THAT MOMENT, THE CHAMBER IS INVADED BY A STRANGE SUBSTANCE...
NEITHER HAVE I! BUT, I THINK OUR PROBLEM IS GROWING MORE SERIOUS!
WHAT SORT OF WEIRD DISPLAY IS THIS!? I-I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT!
I'VE SEEN EFFECTS LIKE THIS BEFORE!-- USED BY MEDIUMS AT SEANCES!--IT'S ECTOPLASM!!

ECTOPLASM! MATERIAL OF THE MIND! AND WHO COULD BE MORE MENTAL THAN OUR VISITOR FROM THE FUTURE!
LOOK--! LOOK!
I-IT'S INCREDIBLE! THE ECTOPLASM IS ACTING AS SOME SORT OF VISUAL SCREEN--!

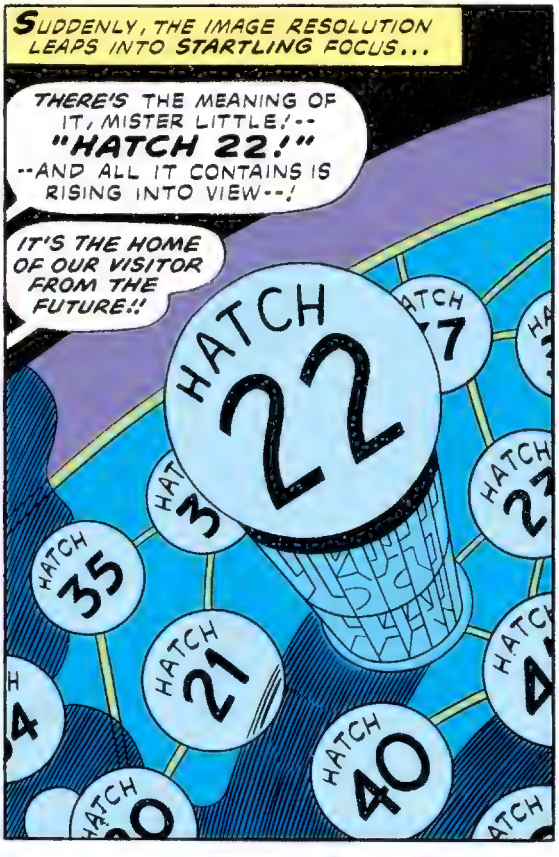

THE THREE GASP IN ASTONISHMENT AS THEY FIND THEMSELVES CONFRONTED BY THE VASTNESS OF SPACE. GALAXIES DRIFT LIKE COSMIC GHOSTS ALONG THEIR LINE OF VISION. STARS AND PLANETS WHEEL IN LONELY MAJESTY...

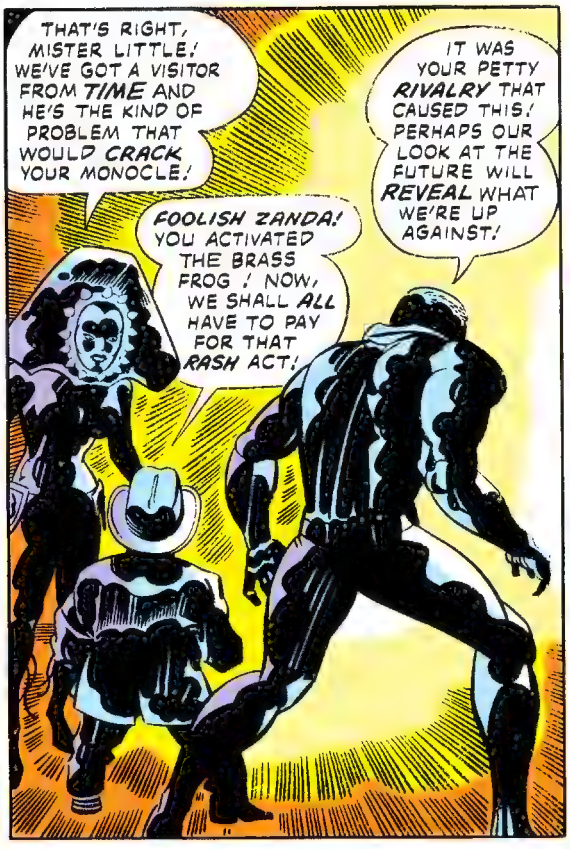

SUDDENLY, THE BLACK PANTHER FINDS HIS VOICE...
THAT LOOKS LIKE OUR OWN MOON!
AND, ITS ORBIT IS SO CLOSE TO THE EARTH!
BUT THAT CAN'T BE OUR EARTH!

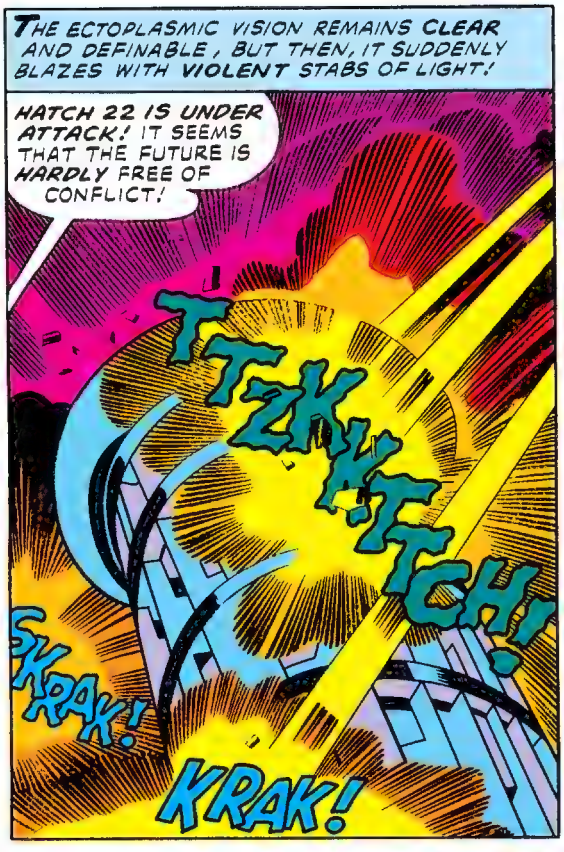

IT SEEMS SMOOTH AS A BILLIARD BALL-- AND REVOLVES AROUND A GIANT RED SUN!

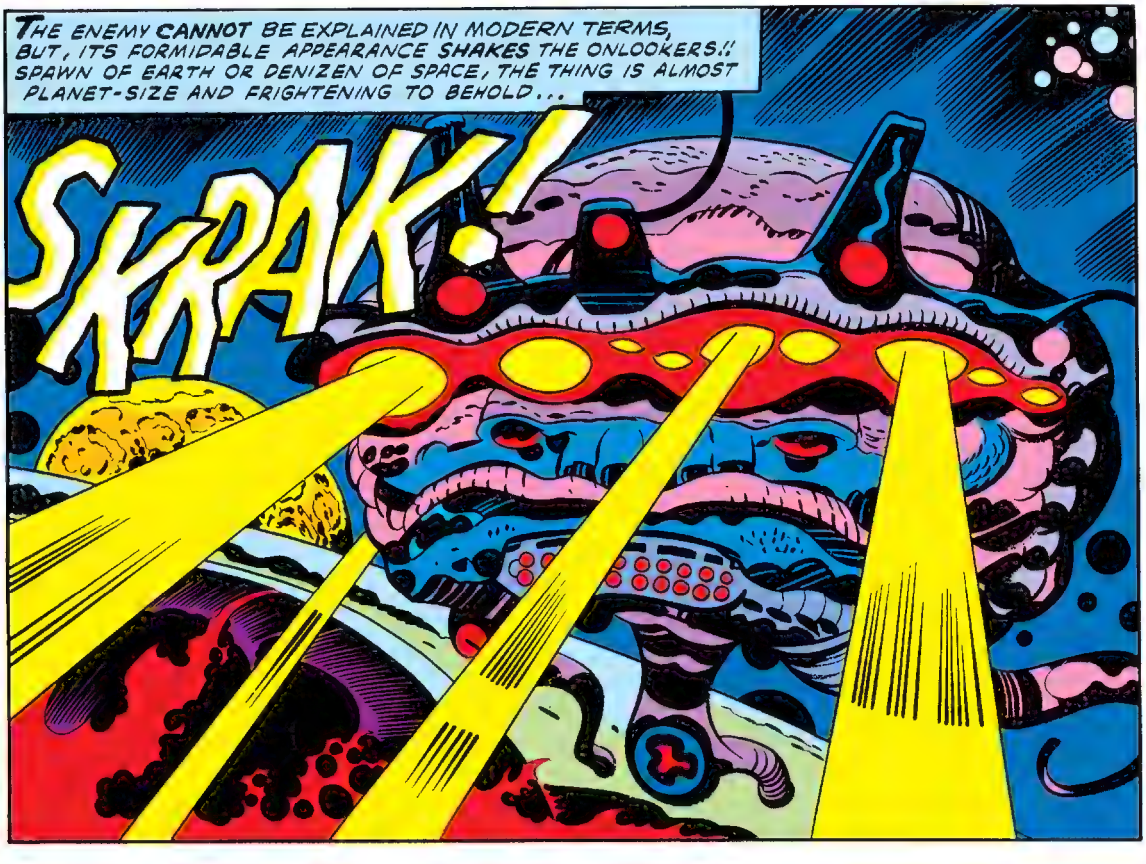

AS THE PLANET LOOMS LARGER, ITS MARKINGS GROW SHARPER. IF THIS IS EARTH, IT IS NOT THE EARTH THAT IS KNOWN AT PRESENT...
THERE ARE NO CONTINENTS OR OCEANS --ONLY THOSE LARGE CIRCULAR DISCS--AND SMALLER DISCS WITHIN THEM. WHAT CAN THEY BE, MISTER PANTHER!?
I'D SAY THEY'RE COUNTRIES, PRINCESS! MY GUESS IS THAT EACH OF THE SMALLER DISCS, INSIDE THOSE CIRCLES, REPRESENT AN INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITY!
BUT, THERE'S NO EVIDENCE OF BUILDINGS OR STREETS--OR MOVEMENT OF ANY KIND!

MAN HAS GONE UNDERGROUND! --THAT'S THE ANSWER! HE CAN'T SURVIVE ON THE SURFACE! HIS HABITAT IS BENEATH EACH OF THOSE DISCS!
THAT'S IT! THOSE DISCS ARE HATCH COVERS!!
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF ALL THIS TWADDLE?!


SUDDENLY, THE IMAGE RESOLUTION LEAPS INTO STARTLING FOCUS...
THERE'S THE MEANING OF IT, MISTER LITTLE!-- "HATCH 22!" --AND ALL IT CONTAINS IS RISING INTO VIEW--!
IT'S THE HOME OF OUR VISITOR FROM THE FUTURE!!
HATCH 22
HATCH 35
HATCH 21
HATCH 40


THAT'S RIGHT, MISTER LITTLE! WE'VE GOT A VISITOR FROM TIME AND HE'S THE KIND OF PROBLEM THAT WOULD CRACK YOUR MONOCLE!
IT WAS YOUR PETTY RIVALRY THAT CAUSED THIS! PERHAPS OUR LOOK AT THE FUTURE WILL REVEAL WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST!
FOOLISH ZANDA! YOU ACTIVATED THE BRASS FROG! NOW, WE SHALL ALL HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT RASH ACT!


THE ECTOPLASMIC VISION REMAINS CLEAR AND DEFINABLE, BUT THEN, IT SUDDENLY BLAZES WITH VIOLENT STABS OF LIGHT!
HATCH 22 IS UNDER ATTACK! IT SEEMS THAT THE FUTURE IS HARDLY FREE OF CONFLICT!
TTZKKTCH!
SKRAK!
KRAK!

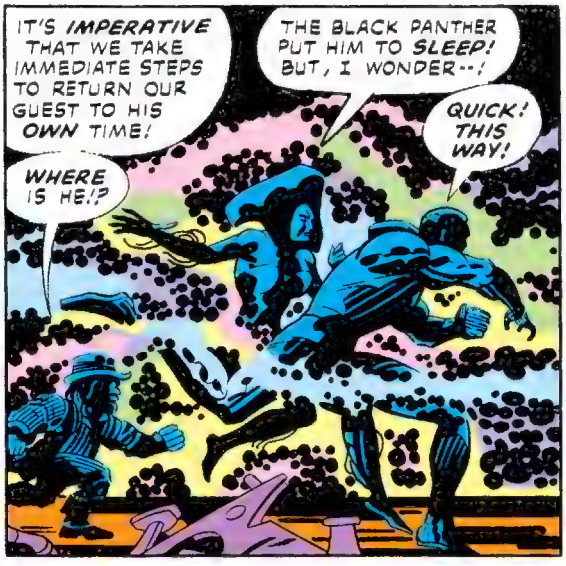

THE ENEMY CANNOT BE EXPLAINED IN MODERN TERMS, BUT, ITS FORMIDABLE APPEARANCE SHAKES THE ONLOOKERS!! SPAWN OF EARTH OR DENIZEN OF SPACE, THE THING IS ALMOST PLANET-SIZE AND FRIGHTENING TO BEHOLD...
SKRAK!

BY THE GODS! THAT HORRIBLE THING SEEMS CAPABLE OF DESTROYING ENTIRE NATIONS!
THERE'S NO SIGN OF DEFENSE AGAINST THE CREATURE!!
WAIT! THAT LOOKS LIKE OUR VISITOR, LEVITATING FROM THE HATCH!

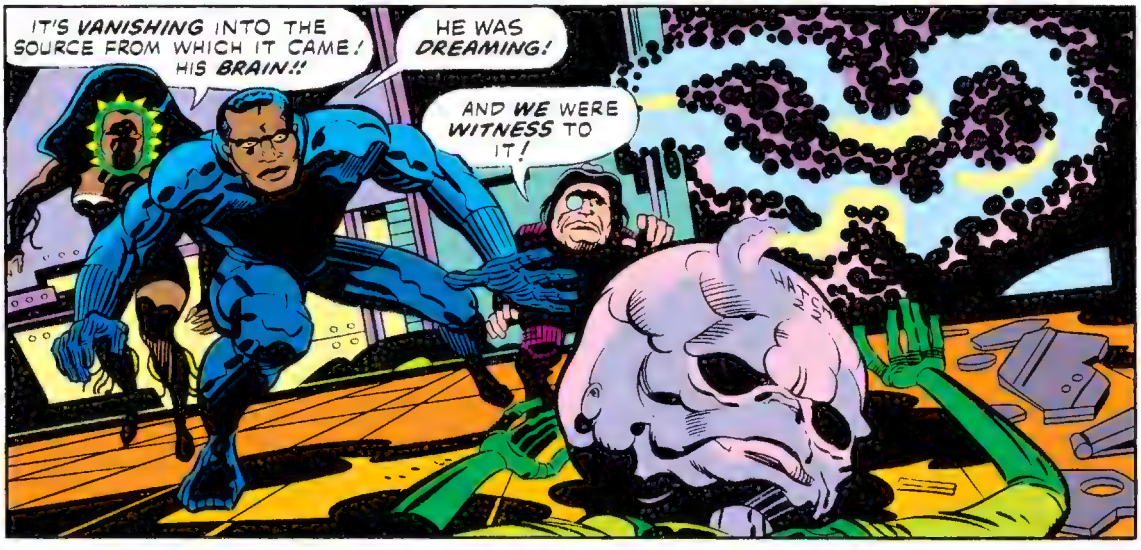
THERE IS NO VISIBLE SIGN OF FEAR OR INDECISION FROM THE FUTURE-DWELLER. HE HALTS IN MID-AIR AS SIMPLY AS HE DEFIES GRAVITY -- AND UNLEASHES A POWERFUL FLAMING BEAM FROM THE CENTER OF HIS FOREHEAD.
HATCH 22

A MOMENTARY BUILD-UP OF INTENSE SOLAR HEAT IS THE ONLY INDICATION OF WHAT IS TO COME! THEN --!!!
WAARRAM!

THE FUTURE IMAGE FADES AFTER THAT -- LEAVING ECTOPLASMIC RESIDUE AND A DEEP SILENCE IN ITS WAKE. MINUTES SEEM TO PASS BEFORE THE BLACK PANTHER SPEAKS...
BOTH OF YOU SAW THE SAME THING I DID! YOU KNOW WHAT OUR VISITOR CAN DO!
HE'S MORE DANGEROUS TO THIS CENTURY THAN A STOCK-PILE OF HYDROGEN BOMBS!
FOR THE FIRST TIME, MISTER LITTLE -- WE AGREE!

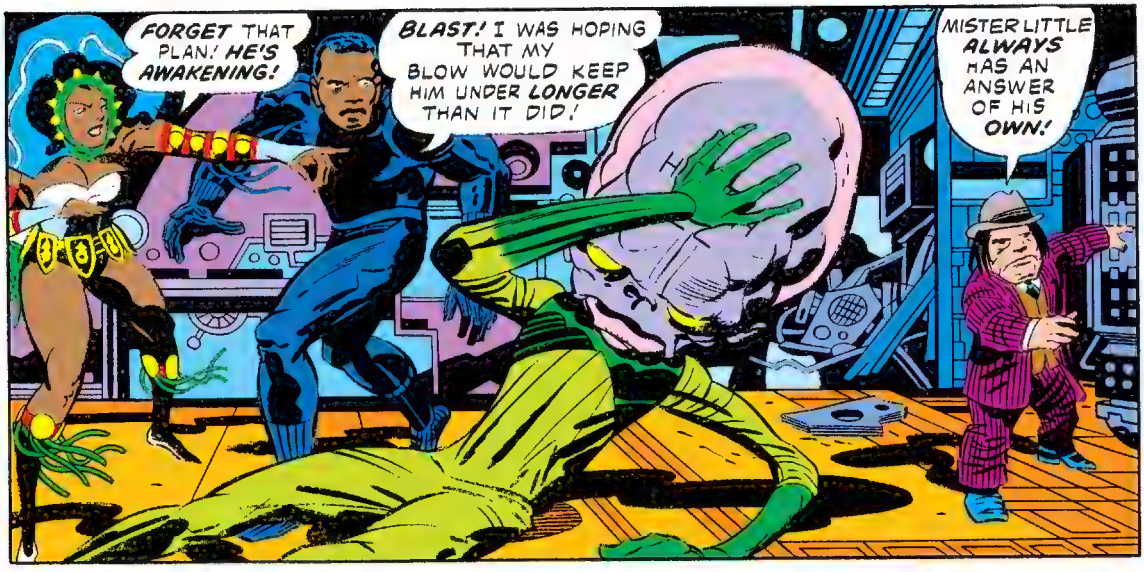

IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT WE TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO RETURN OUR GUEST TO HIS OWN TIME!
THE BLACK PANTHER PUT HIM TO SLEEP! BUT, I WONDER--!
QUICK! THIS WAY!
WHERE IS HE!?

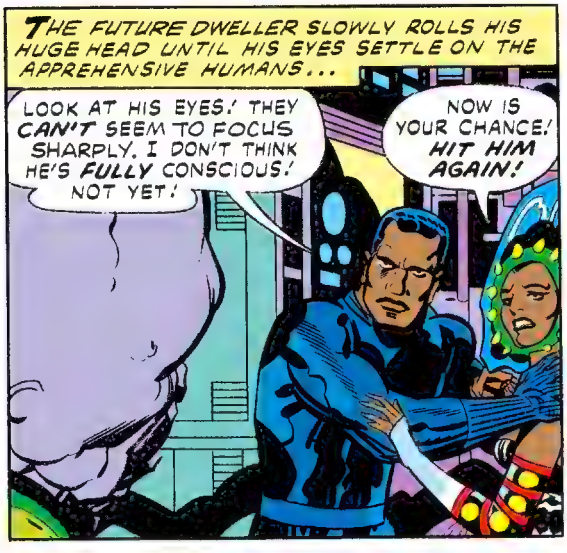
THE ECTOPLASMIC SUBSTANCE BEGINS TO RECEDE AS THE TRIO RACES TO CHECK ON THE CONDITION OF THEIR TIME CAPTIVE...
PRAISE BE TO THE PANTHER CULT! HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS!!
L-LOOK AT THE ECTOPLASM!


IT'S VANISHING INTO THE SOURCE FROM WHICH IT CAME! HIS BRAIN!!
HE WAS DREAMING!
AND WE WERE WITNESS TO IT!

HIS BRAIN-WAVES ARE POWERFUL BEYOND MEASURE! ONCE HE'S AWAKE, WE'LL BE COMPLETELY AT HIS MERCY!
IF YOU STRUCK HIM, PANTHER, HE WON'T BE INCLINED TO USE MERCY!

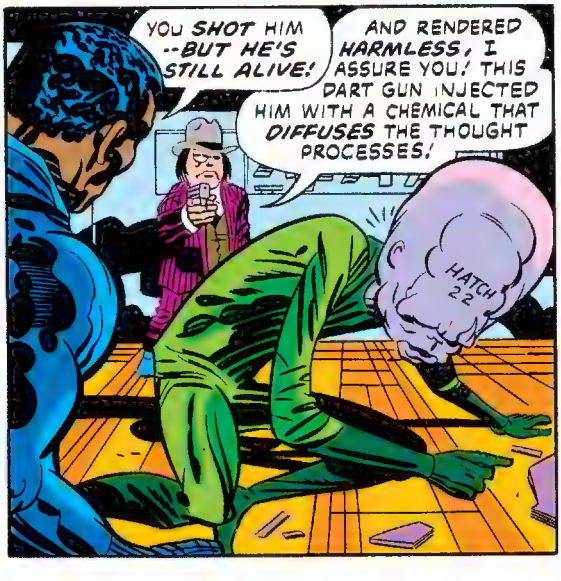
HE WON'T SPARE COLLECTORS EITHER, MISTER LITTLE! OUR TASK IS TO KEEP HIM TRANQUILIZED UNTIL WE CAN REACH THE MISSING UNIT OF OUR TIME MACHINE--!
THE "BRASS FROG'S" TWIN!


FORGET THAT PLAN! HE'S AWAKENING!
BLAST! I WAS HOPING THAT MY BLOW WOULD KEEP HIM UNDER LONGER THAN IT DID!
MISTER LITTLE ALWAYS HAS AN ANSWER OF HIS OWN!

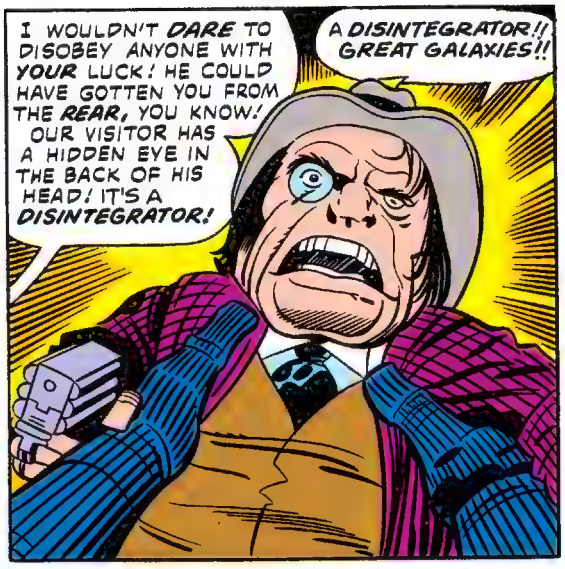

THE FUTURE DWELLER SLOWLY ROLLS HIS HUGE HEAD UNTIL HIS EYES SETTLE ON THE APPREHENSIVE HUMANS...
LOOK AT HIS EYES! THEY CAN'T SEEM TO FOCUS SHARPLY. I DON'T THINK HE'S FULLY CONSCIOUS!
NOT YET!
NOW IS YOUR CHANCE! HIT HIM AGAIN!

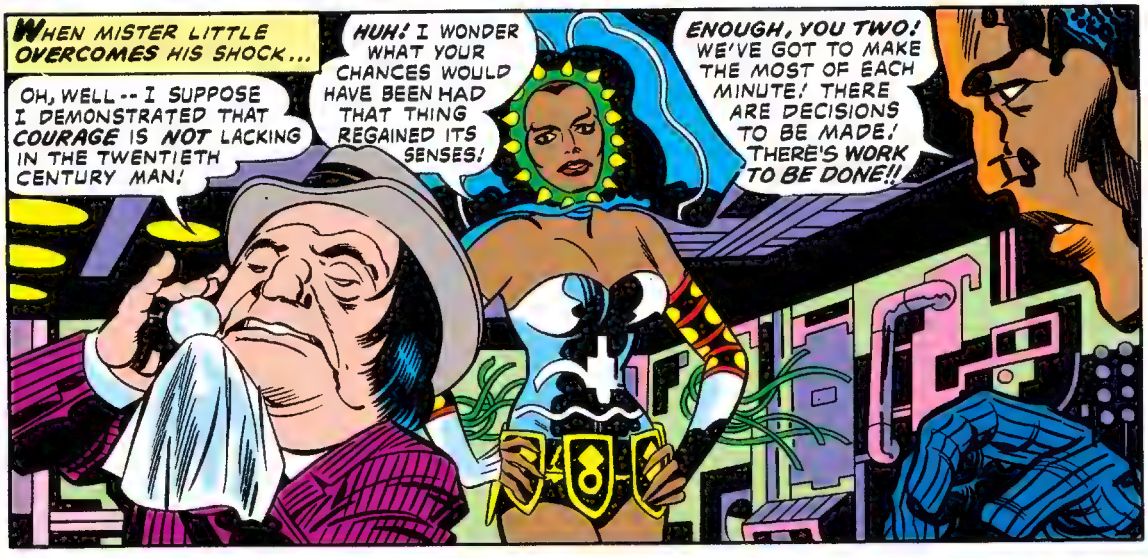
I... CAN'T! I CAN'T!! IT'S JUST TOO BRUTAL! WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE OUR CHANCES AND TRY TO REASON WITH HIM!
REASON WITH A CREATURE WHO REGARDS US AS PETS?!! YOU FOOL!

SUDDENLY --!!
STAND CLEAR! THIS SHOT WILL SAVE OUR LIVES--AND GAIN US A DOCILE CAPTIVE!
POK!

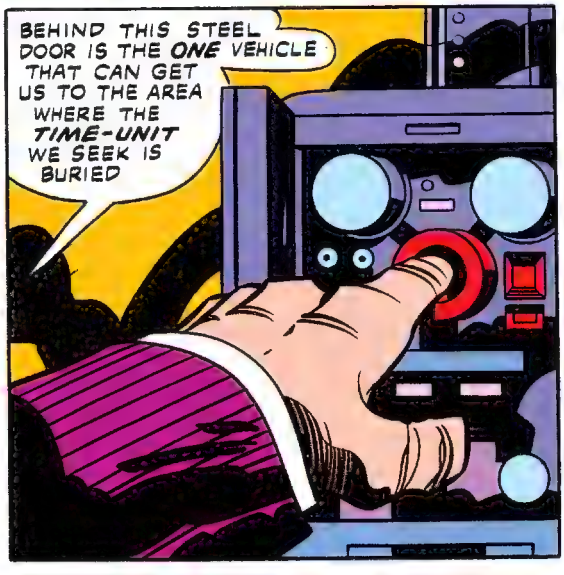

YOU SHOT HIM --BUT HE'S STILL ALIVE!
AND RENDERED HARMLESS, I ASSURE YOU! THIS DART GUN INJECTED HIM WITH A CHEMICAL THAT DIFFUSES THE THOUGHT PROCESSES!
HATCH 22

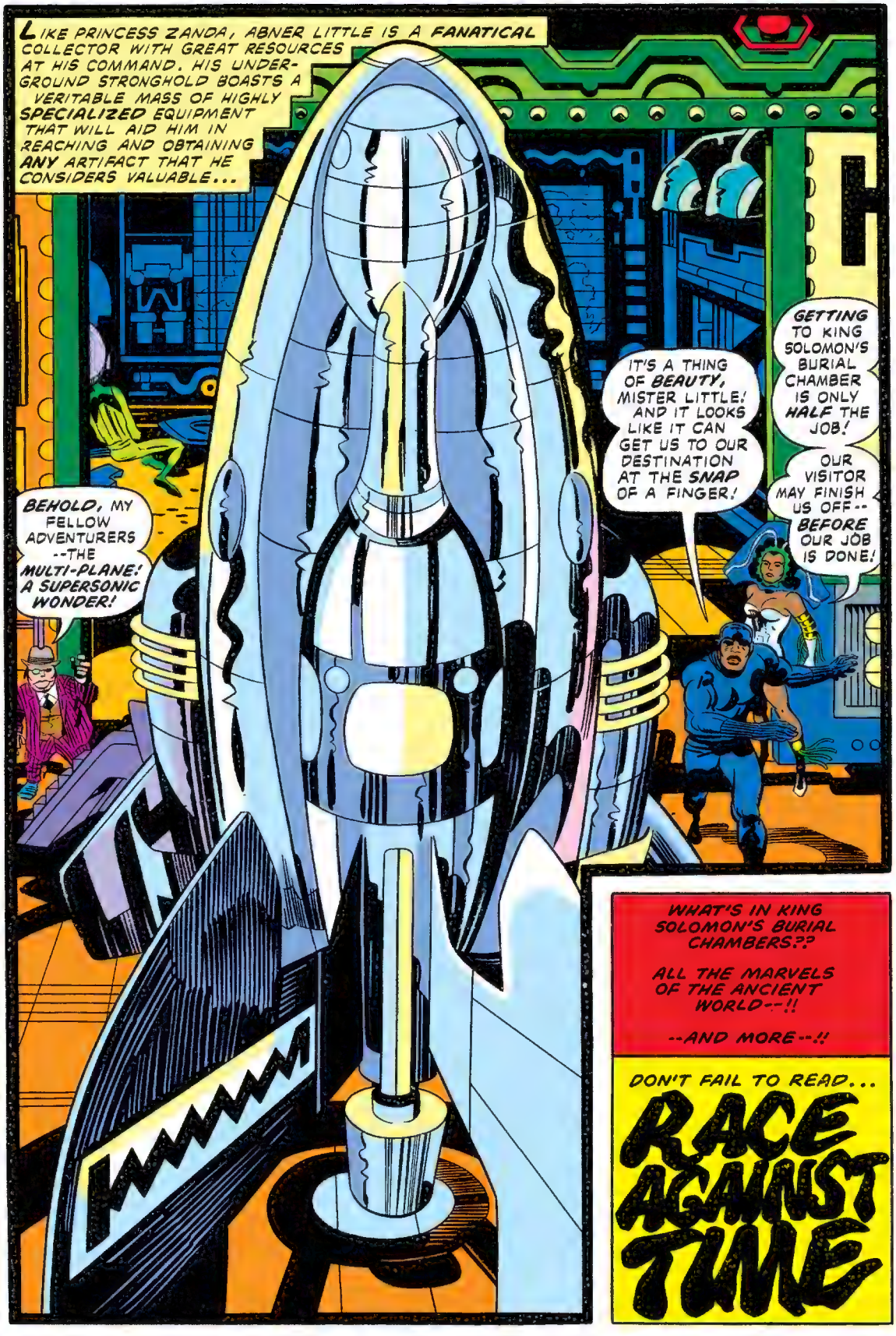
YOU'RE A HERO, MISTER LITTLE! YOU'VE GIVEN US ADDITIONAL TIME TO COMPLETE WHAT WE MUST DO --RETURN HIM TO HIS OWN ERA!
WE'VE GOT TWENTY FOUR HOURS, PRECISELY! THE CHEMICAL LOSES ITS EFFECT AFTER THAT!
NOW, PUT ME DOWN!


I WOULDN'T DARE TO DISOBEY ANYONE WITH YOUR LUCK! HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN YOU FROM THE REAR, YOU KNOW! OUR VISITOR HAS A HIDDEN EYE IN THE BACK OF HIS HEAD! IT'S A DISINTEGRATOR!
A DISINTEGRATOR!! GREAT GALAXIES!!


WHEN MISTER LITTLE OVERCOMES HIS SHOCK...
OH, WELL -- I SUPPOSE I DEMONSTRATED THAT COURAGE IS NOT LACKING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY MAN!
HUH! I WONDER WHAT YOUR CHANCES WOULD HAVE BEEN HAD THAT THING REGAINED ITS SENSES!
ENOUGH, YOU TWO! WE'VE GOT TO MAKE THE MOST OF EACH MINUTE! THERE ARE DECISIONS TO BE MADE! THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE!!

IF AN ERA, IN OUR VISITOR'S TERMS, IS A MILLION YEARS IN OURS, THEN THE SIXTH ERA, HIS OWN TIME, IS SIX MILLION YEARS IN THE FUTURE!!
RETURNING HIM WILL BE A TALL ORDER!
THERE IS NOTHING THAT MISTER LITTLE IS NOT PREPARED FOR! WE NEED SPEED FOR THIS JOB! AND I'VE GOT IT!


BEHIND THIS STEEL DOOR IS THE ONE VEHICLE THAT CAN GET US TO THE AREA WHERE THE TIME-UNIT WE SEEK IS BURIED


LIKE PRINCESS ZANDA, ABNER LITTLE IS A FANATICAL COLLECTOR WITH GREAT RESOURCES AT HIS COMMAND. HIS UNDERGROUND STRONGHOLD BOASTS A VERITABLE MASS OF HIGHLY SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT THAT WILL AID HIM IN REACHING AND OBTAINING ANY ARTIFACT THAT HE CONSIDERS VALUABLE...
BEHOLD, MY FELLOW ADVENTURERS --THE MULTI-PLANE! A SUPERSONIC WONDER!
IT'S A THING OF BEAUTY, MISTER LITTLE! AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT CAN GET US TO OUR DESTINATION AT THE SNAP OF A FINGER!
GETTING TO KING SOLOMON'S BURIAL CHAMBER IS ONLY HALF THE JOB!
OUR VISITOR MAY FINISH US OFF-- BEFORE OUR JOB IS DONE!
WHAT'S IN KING SOLOMON'S BURIAL CHAMBERS??
ALL THE MARVELS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD--!!
--AND MORE--!!
DON'T FAIL TO READ...
RACE AGAINST TIME

BLACK PANTHER
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
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MAY
02685
POWER-PACKED ACTION WITH THE
BLACK PANTHER
TM
© 1976 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
CHAOS IN KING SOLOMON'S TOMB!
LURKING EVIL STALKS THE HAUNTED HALLS!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN, AND DRAWN BY JACK KIRBY INKED BY MIKE ROYER OVERSEEN BY ARCHIE GOODWIN

SUPPOSE YOU TOOK OFF IN A PLANE WITH PEOPLE YOU COULDN'T TRUST--IN SEARCH OF A MACHINE NOT YET INVENTED--TO A PLACE WHICH NO MAN CAN FIND!! SUPPOSE YOU HAD TO DO THIS IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM A CREATURE NOT YET BORN!! AND IF THAT DOESN'T SOUND HORRIFYING ENOUGH--SUPPOSE YOU ONLY HAD TWENTY-FOUR HOURS TO GET THIS IMPOSSIBLE JOB DONE!! IT'S MURDER, MAN! IT'S A--

RACE AGAINST TIME

LETTERED BY: M.W. ROYER
COLORED BY: P. GOLDBERG

YOU'RE DOING FINE, PANTHER! THE CONTROLS OF MY MULTI-PLANE REPRESENT A TRUE TEST FOR THE MOST ABLE PILOT!

BUT THEN, YOU HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO SUCCEED AT THIS JOB!

A KING'S SON MUST SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITIES FAR BEYOND THE ORDINARY MAN!

LUCKILY FOR US I'VE BEEN CHECKED OUT ON MANY PLANES OF ADVANCED DESIGN!

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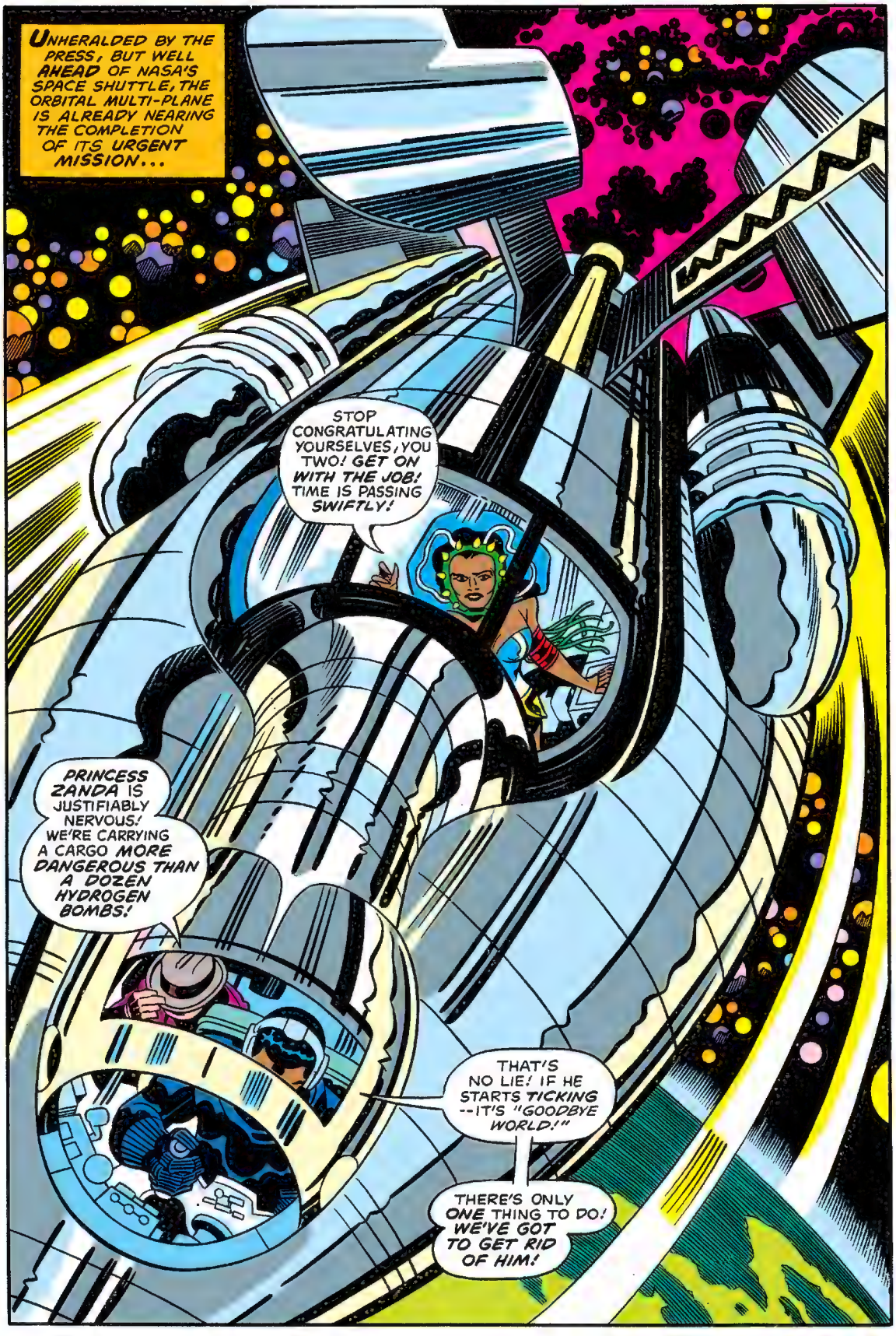
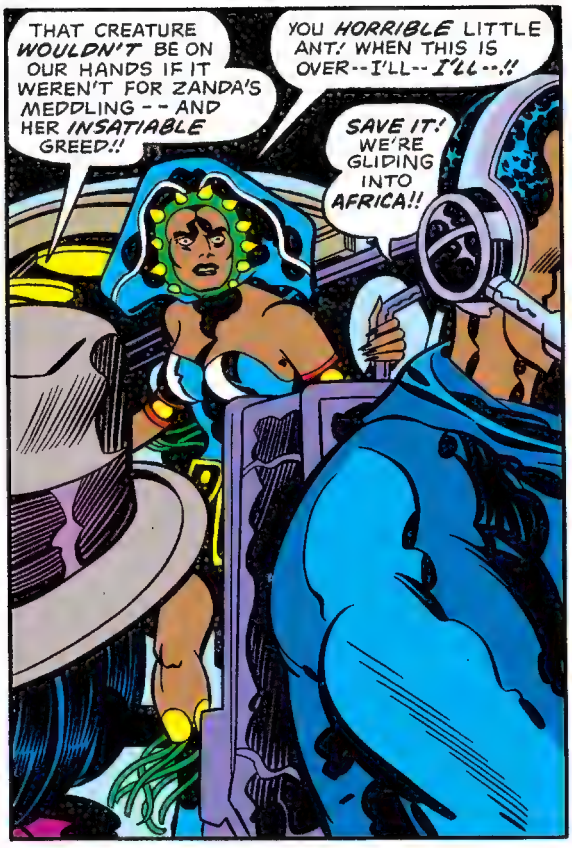
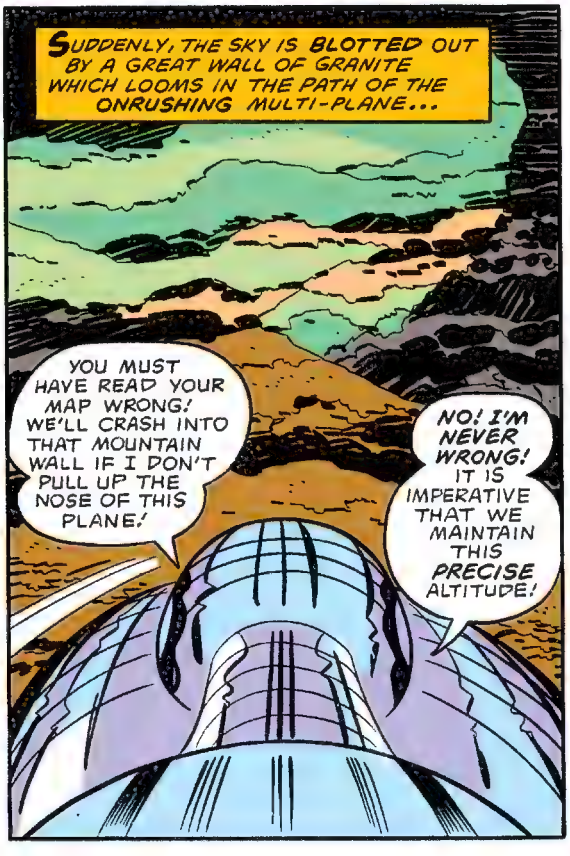
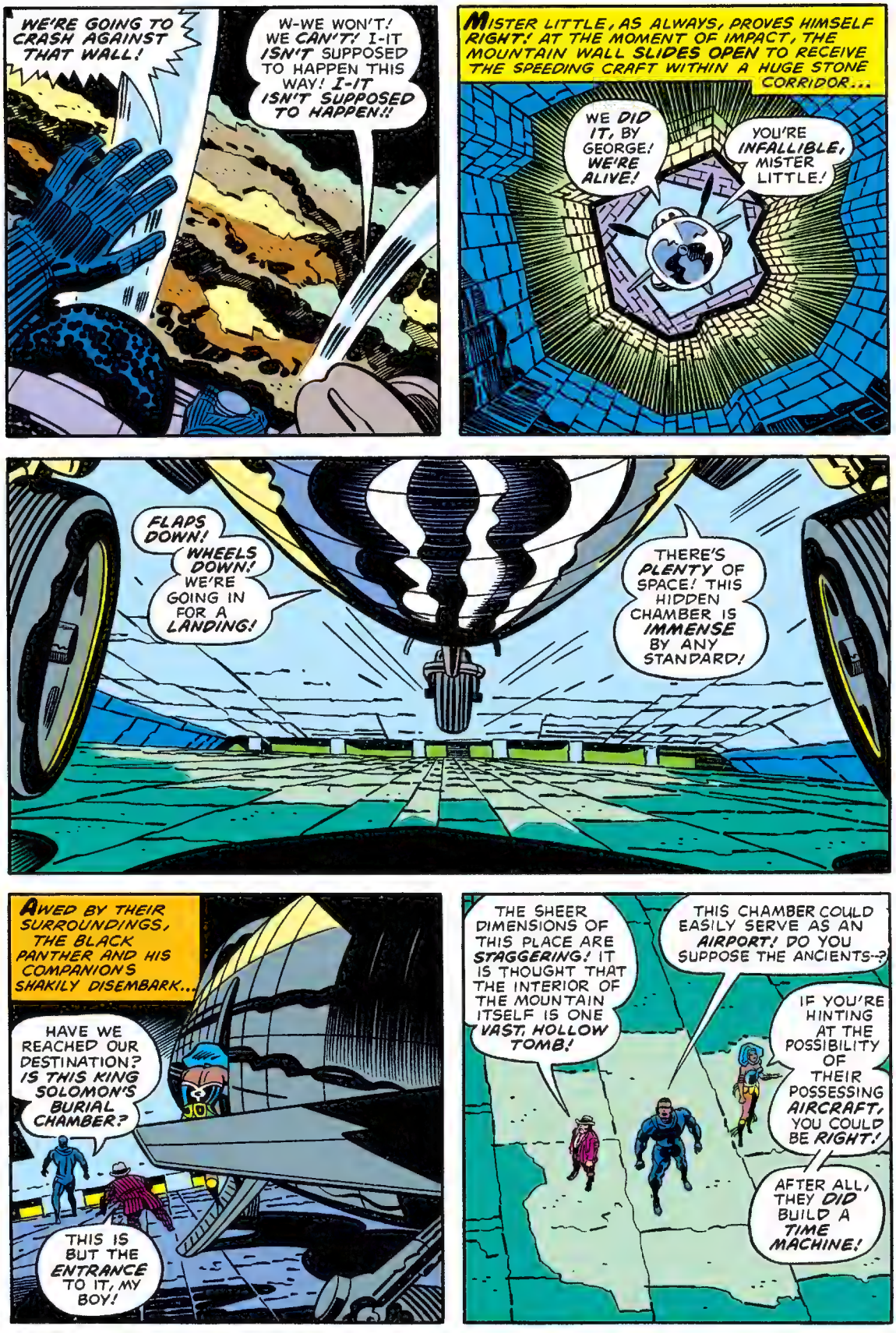

UNHERALDED BY THE PRESS, BUT WELL AHEAD OF NASA'S SPACE SHUTTLE, THE ORBITAL MULTI-PLANE IS ALREADY NEARING THE COMPLETION OF ITS URGENT MISSION...
STOP CONGRATULATING YOURSELVES, YOU TWO! GET ON WITH THE JOB! TIME IS PASSING SWIFTLY!
PRINCESS ZANDA IS JUSTIFIABLY NERVOUS! WE'RE CARRYING A CARGO MORE DANGEROUS THAN A DOZEN HYDROGEN BOMBS!
THAT'S NO LIE! IF HE STARTS TICKING --IT'S "GOODBYE WORLD!"
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO! WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM!

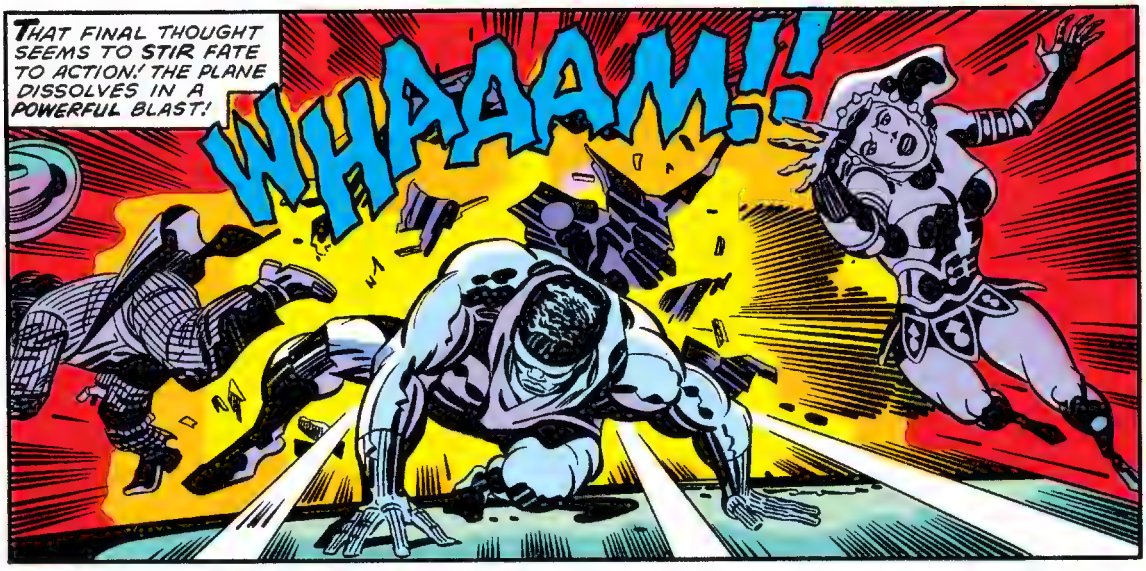

THAT CREATURE WOULDN'T BE ON OUR HANDS IF IT WEREN'T FOR ZANDA'S MEDDLING -- AND HER INSATIABLE GREED!!
YOU HORRIBLE LITTLE ANT! WHEN THIS IS OVER--I'LL-- I'LL--!!
SAVE IT! WE'RE GLIDING INTO AFRICA!!

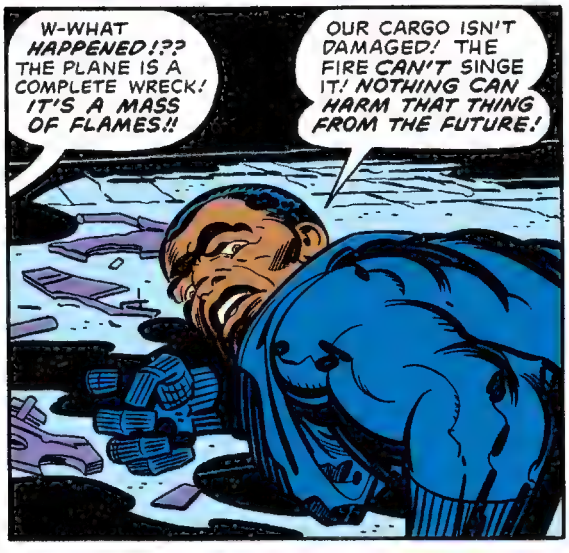
IT TAKES SCANT MINUTES FOR THE MULTI-PLANE TO SKIM THE SAHARA DESERT AND REACH THE RUGGED ATLAS MOUNTAINS...
MISTER LITTLE! ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT WE'VE GOT TO LAND IN THIS TERRITORY?
PLEASE FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS! HOLD THIS COURSE--AND STAY ON IT!

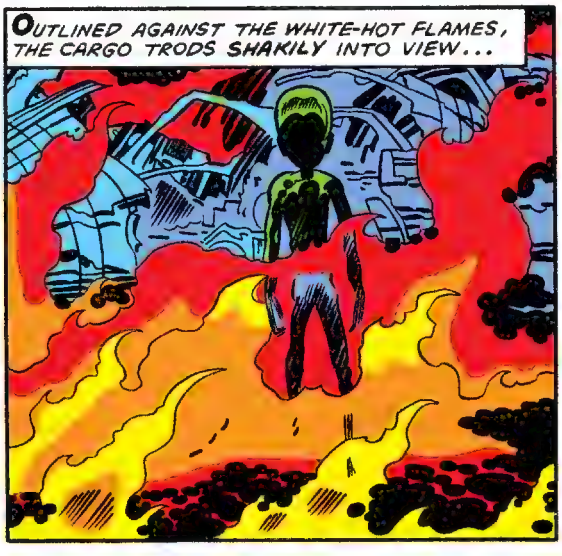

SUDDENLY, THE SKY IS BLOTTED OUT BY A GREAT WALL OF GRANITE WHICH LOOMS IN THE PATH OF THE ONRUSHING MULTI-PLANE...
YOU MUST HAVE READ YOUR MAP WRONG! WE'LL CRASH INTO THAT MOUNTAIN WALL IF I DON'T PULL UP THE NOSE OF THIS PLANE!
NO! I'M NEVER WRONG! IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE MAINTAIN THIS PRECISE ALTITUDE!

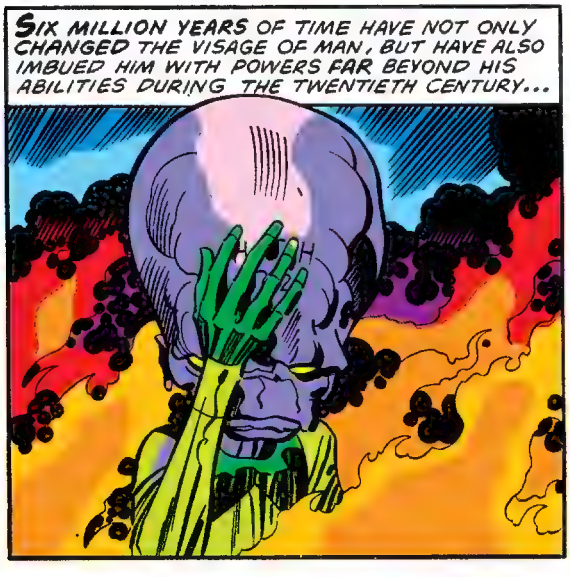
I KNOW THAT IT SEEMS SUICIDAL! BUT STEEL YOUR NERVES TO THIS TASK!
DON'T LISTEN TO THAT MADMAN! PULL UP!
PULL UP!!
I-IT'S TOO LATE! W-WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT--NOW!!

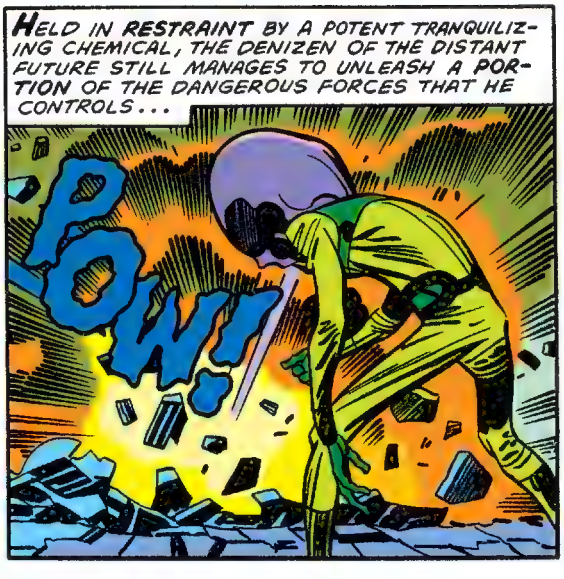

WE'RE GOING TO CRASH AGAINST THAT WALL!
W-WE WON'T! WE CAN'T! I-IT ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN THIS WAY! I-IT ISN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN!!
MISTER LITTLE, AS ALWAYS, PROVES HIMSELF RIGHT! AT THE MOMENT OF IMPACT, THE MOUNTAIN WALL SLIDES OPEN TO RECEIVE THE SPEEDING CRAFT WITHIN A HUGE STONE CORRIDOR...
WE DID IT, BY GEORGE! WE'RE ALIVE!
YOU'RE INFALLIBLE, MISTER LITTLE!
FLAPS DOWN!
WHEELS DOWN! WE'RE GOING IN FOR A LANDING!
THERE'S PLENTY OF SPACE! THIS HIDDEN CHAMBER IS IMMENSE BY ANY STANDARD!
AWED BY THEIR SURROUNDINGS, THE BLACK PANTHER AND HIS COMPANIONS SHAKILY DISEMBARK...
HAVE WE REACHED OUR DESTINATION? IS THIS KING SOLOMON'S BURIAL CHAMBER?
THIS IS BUT THE ENTRANCE TO IT, MY BOY!
THE SHEER DIMENSIONS OF THIS PLACE ARE STAGGERING! IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE INTERIOR OF THE MOUNTAIN ITSELF IS ONE VAST, HOLLOW TOMB!
THIS CHAMBER COULD EASILY SERVE AS AN AIRPORT! DO YOU SUPPOSE THE ANCIENTS--?
IF YOU'RE HINTING AT THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR POSSESSING AIRCRAFT, YOU COULD BE RIGHT!
AFTER ALL, THEY DID BUILD A TIME MACHINE!


THAT FINAL THOUGHT SEEMS TO STIR FATE TO ACTION! THE PLANE DISSOLVES IN A POWERFUL BLAST!
WHAAAM!!


W-WHAT HAPPENED!?? THE PLANE IS A COMPLETE WRECK! IT'S A MASS OF FLAMES!!
OUR CARGO ISN'T DAMAGED! THE FIRE CAN'T SINGE IT! NOTHING CAN HARM THAT THING FROM THE FUTURE!

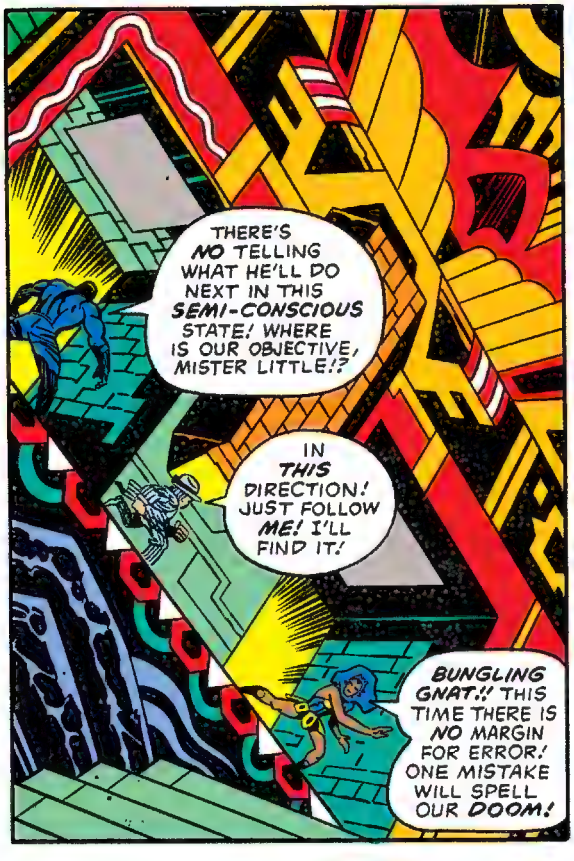

OUTLINED AGAINST THE WHITE-HOT FLAMES, THE CARGO TRODS SHAKILY INTO VIEW...


SIX MILLION YEARS OF TIME HAVE NOT ONLY CHANGED THE VISAGE OF MAN, BUT HAVE ALSO IMBUED HIM WITH POWERS FAR BEYOND HIS ABILITIES DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY...

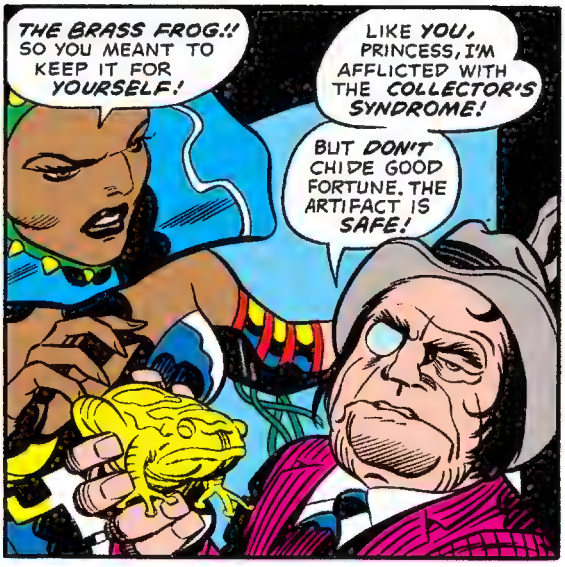

HELD IN RESTRAINT BY A POTENT TRANQUILIZING CHEMICAL, THE DENIZEN OF THE DISTANT FUTURE STILL MANAGES TO UNLEASH A PORTION OF THE DANGEROUS FORCES THAT HE CONTROLS...
POW!

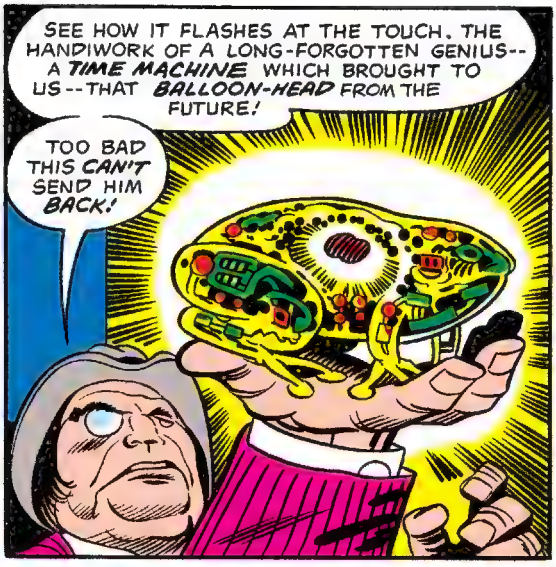
TO YOUR HEELS, FRIENDS! I'VE MISCALCULATED THE POTENCY OF THE CHEMICAL I INJECTED INTO THAT-- CREATURE! IT HASN'T COMPLETELY IMMOBILIZED HIM!!
THAT MEANS HE'LL SHAKE OFF ITS EFFECTS EVEN SOONER THAN WE THOUGHT!
LET'S GET TO WORK!!

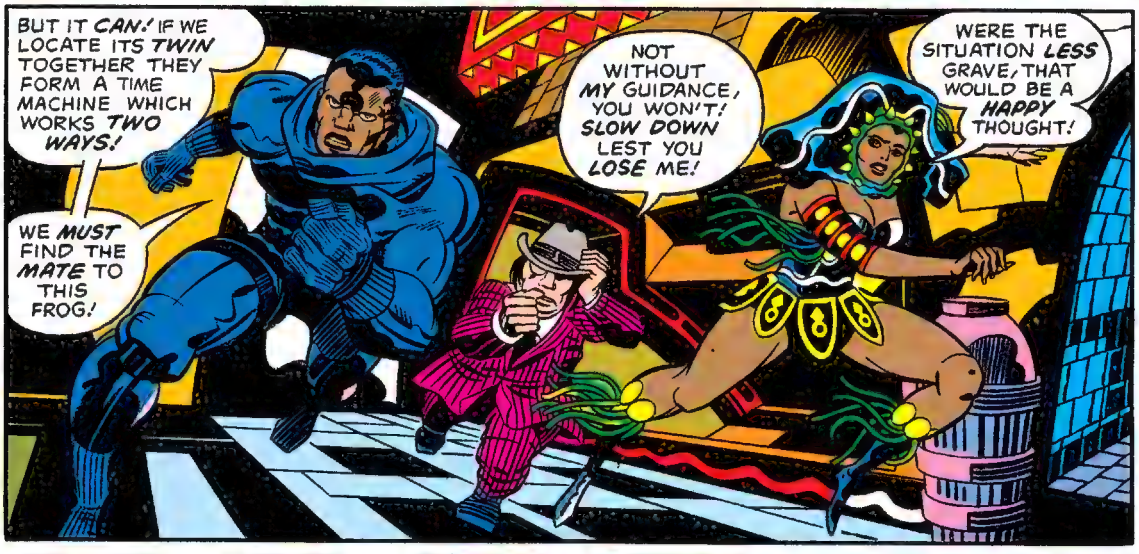
THE DANGER HEIGHTENS AS THE POWERS OF THE MAN FROM THE FAR-FLUNG FUTURE CONTINUE TO GROW IN FURY...
RRIPPP!!
WE'VE GOT TO RETURN HIM TO HIS OWN ERA BEFORE HE DESTROYS US!
STARS AND COMETS!! HE IS USING THE FACULTY OF ANTI-GRAVITY TO TEAR UP THIS GREAT STONE FLOOR!

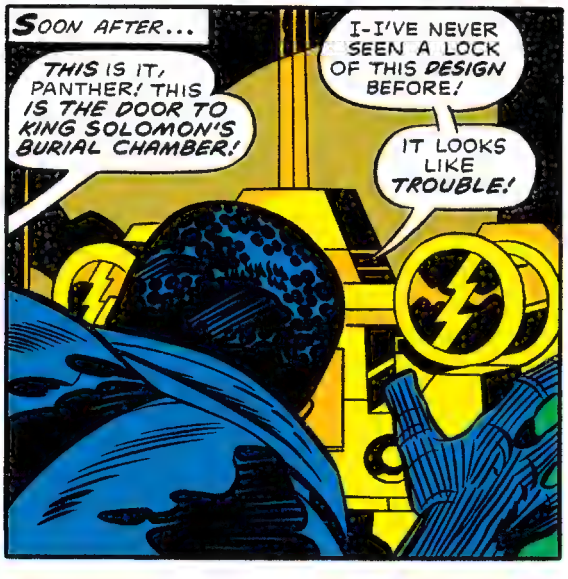

THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL DO NEXT IN THIS SEMI-CONSCIOUS STATE! WHERE IS OUR OBJECTIVE, MISTER LITTLE!?
IN THIS DIRECTION! JUST FOLLOW ME! I'LL FIND IT!
BUNGLING GNAT!! THIS TIME THERE IS NO MARGIN FOR ERROR! ONE MISTAKE WILL SPELL OUR DOOM!

WAIT! I-I THINK WE'VE ALREADY SLIPPED UP! WHERE IS THAT ARTIFACT? WHERE IS THE BRASS FROG!?
BY ALL THE ANCIENT DEVILS! I-IT WAS ABOARD THE PLANE-- WHEN THE CRAFT EXPLODED!!
HEH HEH-- WRONG, MY DEAR! IT'S NEVER LEFT THE PERSON OF ABNER LITTLE!


THE BRASS FROG!! SO YOU MEANT TO KEEP IT FOR YOURSELF!
LIKE YOU, PRINCESS, I'M AFFLICTED WITH THE COLLECTOR'S SYNDROME!
BUT DON'T CHIDE GOOD FORTUNE. THE ARTIFACT IS SAFE!

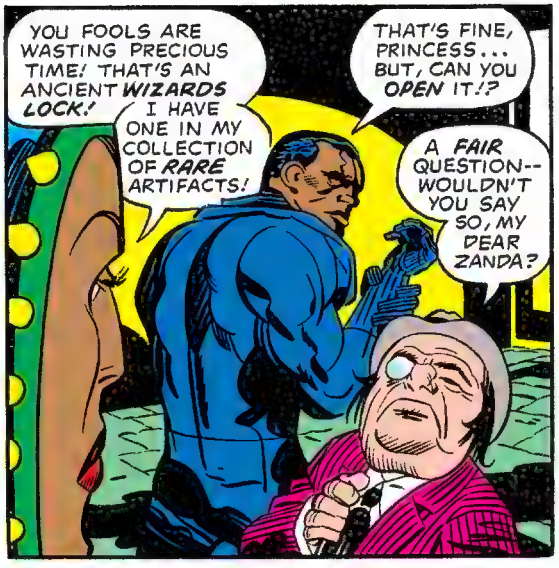

SEE HOW IT FLASHES AT THE TOUCH. THE HANDIWORK OF A LONG-FORGOTTEN GENIUS--A TIME MACHINE WHICH BROUGHT TO US--THAT BALLOON-HEAD FROM THE FUTURE!
TOO BAD THIS CAN'T SEND HIM BACK!

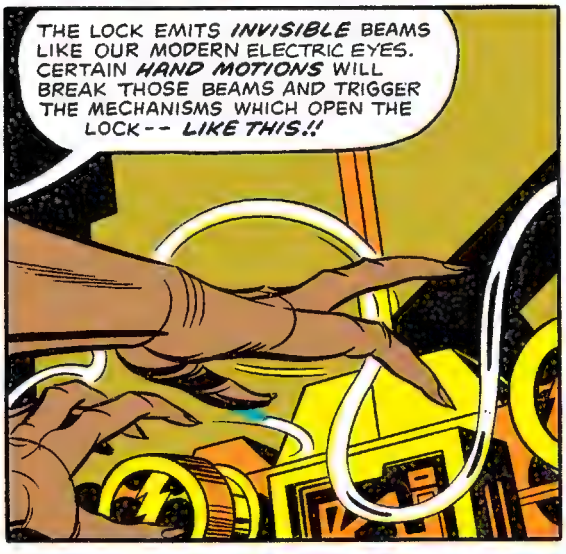

BUT IT CAN! IF WE LOCATE ITS TWIN TOGETHER THEY FORM A TIME MACHINE WHICH WORKS TWO WAYS!
WE MUST FIND THE MATE TO THIS FROG!
NOT WITHOUT MY GUIDANCE, YOU WON'T! SLOW DOWN LEST YOU LOSE ME!
WERE THE SITUATION LESS GRAVE, THAT WOULD BE A HAPPY THOUGHT!


SOON AFTER...
THIS IS IT, PANTHER! THIS IS THE DOOR TO KING SOLOMON'S BURIAL CHAMBER!
I-I'VE NEVER SEEN A LOCK OF THIS DESIGN BEFORE!
IT LOOKS LIKE TROUBLE!

UGH-HH!!
SSKKTCH!

FOOLISH FELLOW! YOU ACTED BEFORE I COULD WARN YOU! KING SOLOMON'S TOMB IS SECURED BY COMPLEX FORCES!
HIGH VOLTAGE FORCES, I'D SAY! IF NOT FOR MY PROTECTIVE GLOVES, I'D BE DEAD AT THIS MOMENT!

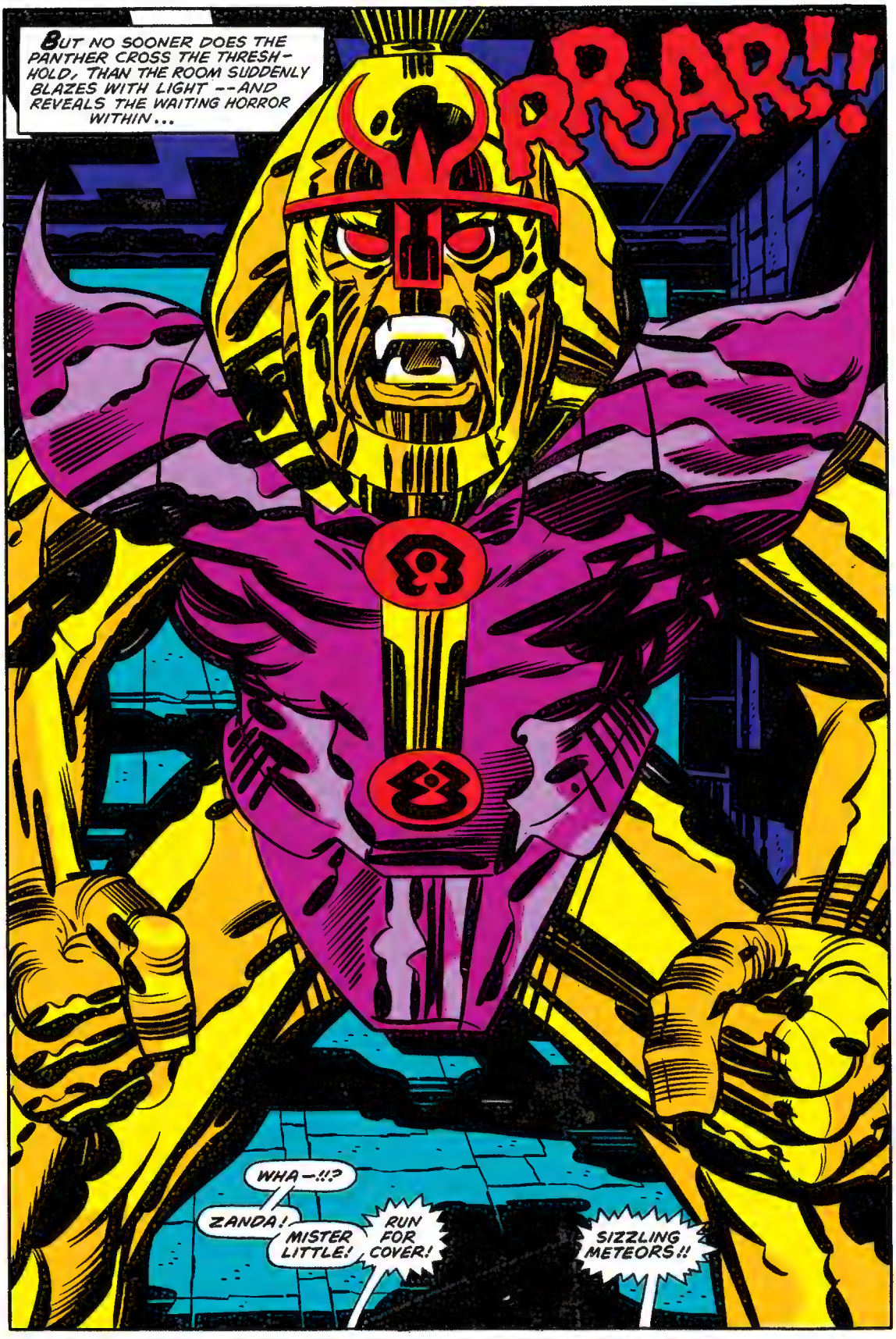

YOU FOOLS ARE WASTING PRECIOUS TIME! THAT'S AN ANCIENT WIZARDS LOCK!
I HAVE ONE IN MY COLLECTION OF RARE ARTIFACTS!
THAT'S FINE, PRINCESS... BUT, CAN YOU OPEN IT!?
A FAIR QUESTION-- WOULDN'T YOU SAY SO, MY DEAR ZANDA?

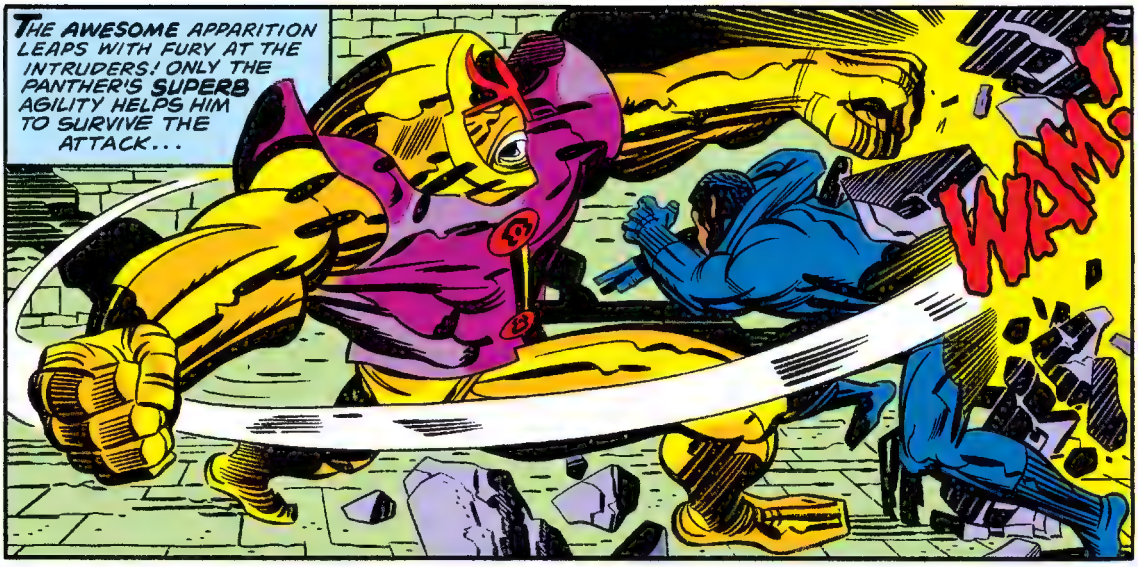

THE LOCK EMITS INVISIBLE BEAMS LIKE OUR MODERN ELECTRIC EYES. CERTAIN HAND MOTIONS WILL BREAK THOSE BEAMS AND TRIGGER THE MECHANISMS WHICH OPEN THE LOCK-- LIKE THIS!!

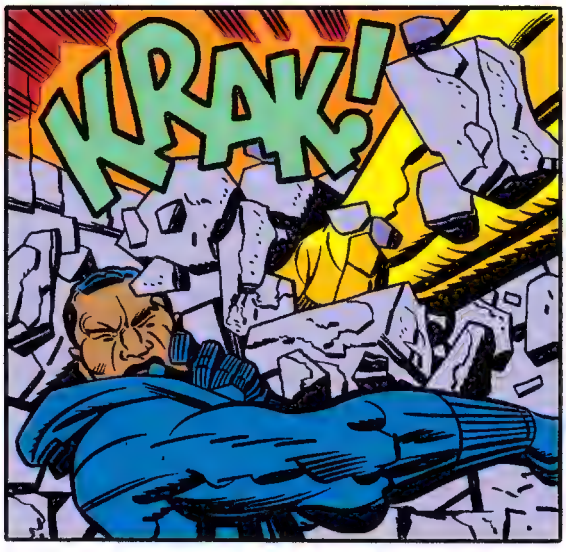
SHE DID IT! THE DOOR IS OPENING! WE'VE GOT IT MADE!
WELL BLESS MY STARS!! THE LADY IS NOT WITHOUT TALENT, AFTER ALL!
KLAK!!

AS A COLLECTING ENTHUSIAST, I BOW TO A CLEVER BUT UNSCRUPULOUS COLLEAGUE!
I LOST FIVE GOOD MECHANICS BEFORE I LEARNED THE SECRET!
POSTPONE THE SMALL TALK! WE'VE GOT TO GET ON WITH THE SEARCH!

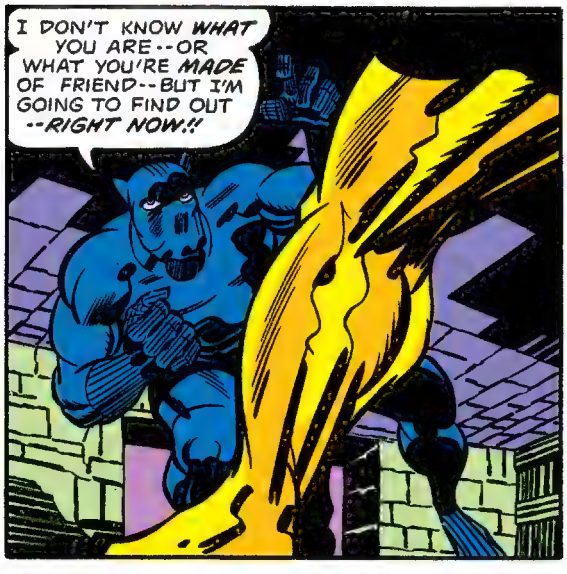
REALIZING THE NECESSITY FOR CAUTION, THE BLACK PANTHER SLOWLY ENTERS THE ADJOINING CHAMBER...
I-IT'S CERTAINLY DARK IN THERE-! I CAN'T SEE A THING!

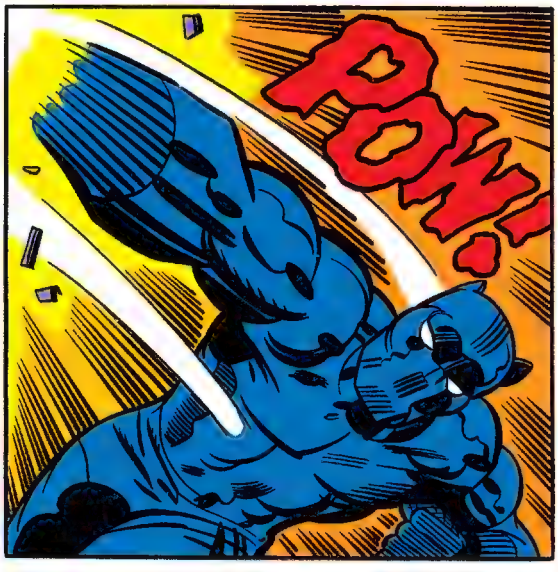

BUT NO SOONER DOES THE PANTHER CROSS THE THRESH-HOLD, THAN THE ROOM SUDDENLY BLAZES WITH LIGHT --AND REVEALS THE WAITING HORROR WITHIN...
RRJAR!!
WHA—!!?
ZANDA!
MISTER LITTLE!
RUN FOR COVER!
SIZZLING METEORS!!

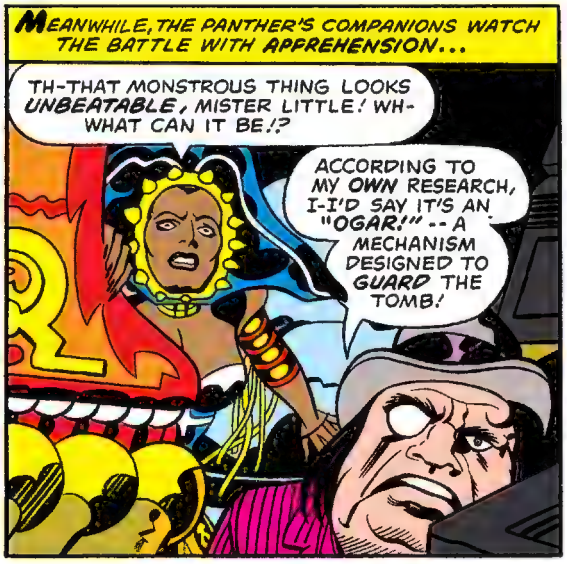

THE AWESOME APPARITION LEAPS WITH FURY AT THE INTRUDERS! ONLY THE PANTHER'S SUPERB AGILITY HELPS HIM TO SURVIVE THE ATTACK...
WAM!

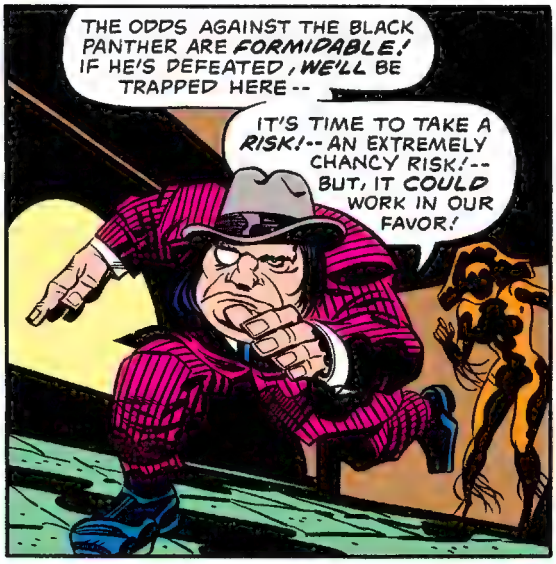


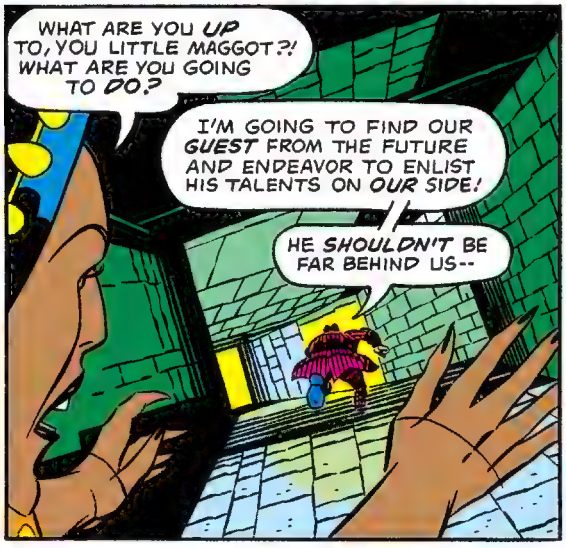
EVEN IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING ODDS, THE TIME HAS COME TO DON THE RITUAL MASK AND FIGHT AS THE BLACK PANTHER, FOR THE HONOR OF HIS CULT--AND ITS NOBLE FOUNDERS...

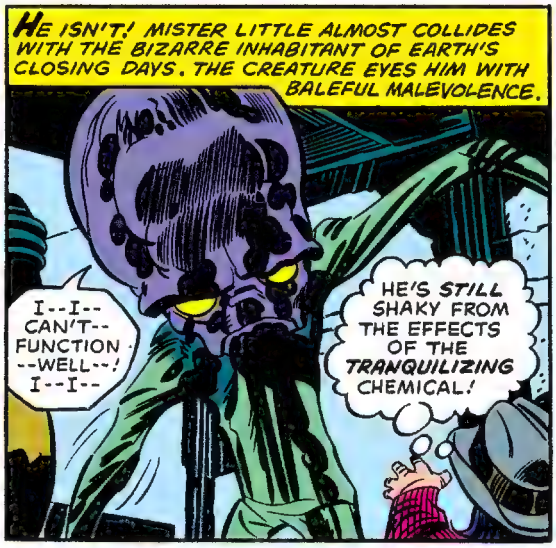




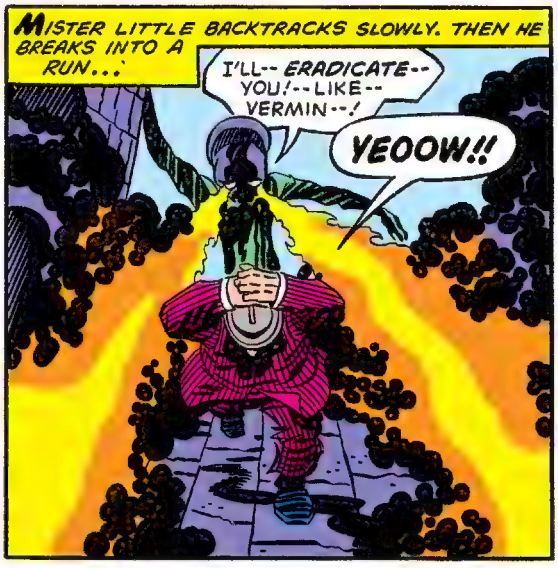

MEANWHILE, THE PANTHER'S COMPANIONS WATCH THE BATTLE WITH APPREHENSION...
TH-THAT MONSTROUS THING LOOKS UNBEATABLE, MISTER LITTLE! WH-WHAT CAN IT BE!?
ACCORDING TO MY OWN RESEARCH, I-I'D SAY IT'S AN "OGAR!" -- A MECHANISM DESIGNED TO GUARD THE TOMB!

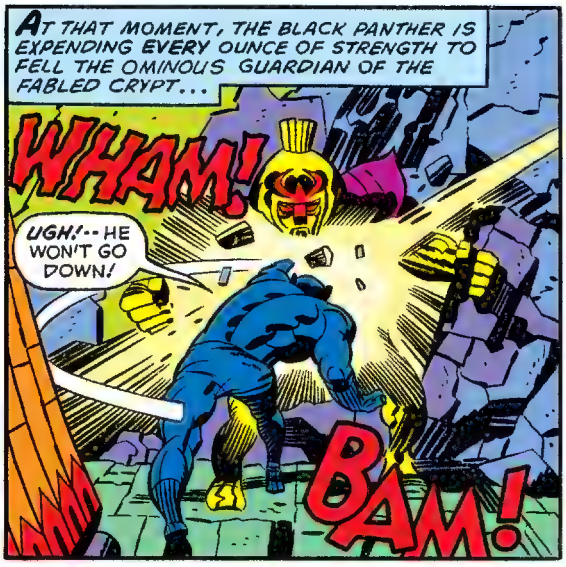

THE ODDS AGAINST THE BLACK PANTHER ARE FORMIDABLE! IF HE'S DEFEATED, WE'LL BE TRAPPED HERE--
IT'S TIME TO TAKE A RISK!-- AN EXTREMELY CHANCY RISK!-- BUT, IT COULD WORK IN OUR FAVOR!

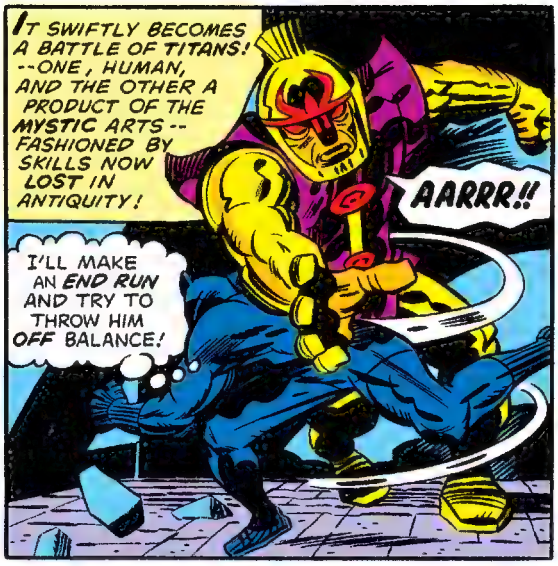

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, YOU LITTLE MAGGOT?! WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
I'M GOING TO FIND OUR GUEST FROM THE FUTURE AND ENDEAVOR TO ENLIST HIS TALENTS ON OUR SIDE!
HE SHOULDN'T BE FAR BEHIND US--

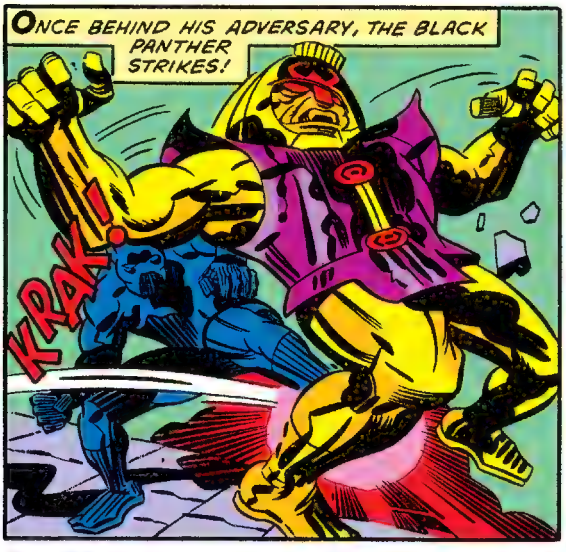

HE ISN'T! MISTER LITTLE ALMOST COLLIDES WITH THE BIZARRE INHABITANT OF EARTH'S CLOSING DAYS. THE CREATURE EYES HIM WITH BALEFUL MALEVOLENCE.
I--I-- CAN'T-- FUNCTION --WELL--! I--I--
HE'S STILL SHAKY FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE TRANQUILIZING CHEMICAL!

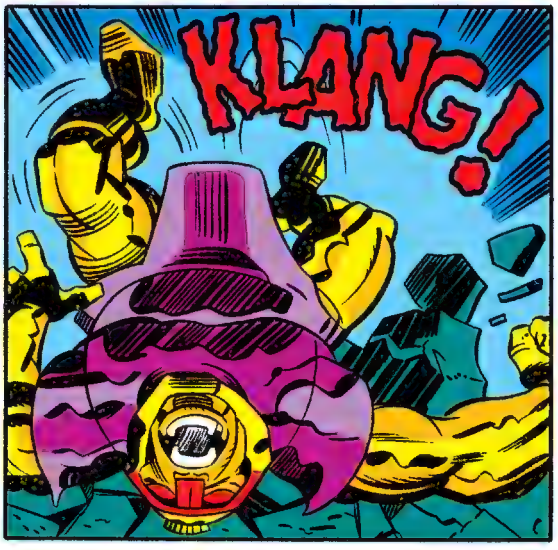
YOU-! YOU DID-- THIS-- TO --ME--! LITTLE-- ANIMAL--!
I-IT WAS ONLY MEANT TO CALM YOU, SIR-- SO WE COULD--HEH HEH --COMMUNICATE-!
I'M AFRAID HE WASN'T TOO THRILLED BY THAT REPLY!

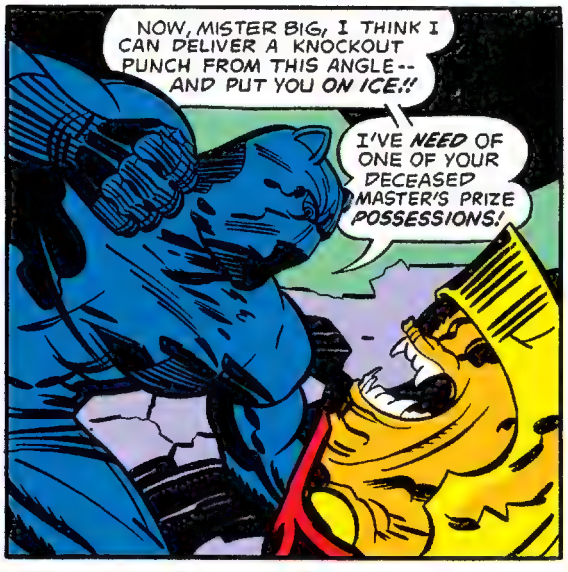

MISTER LITTLE BACKTRACKS SLOWLY. THEN HE BREAKS INTO A RUN...
I'LL-- ERADICATE-- YOU!-- LIKE-- VERMIN--!
YEOOW!!

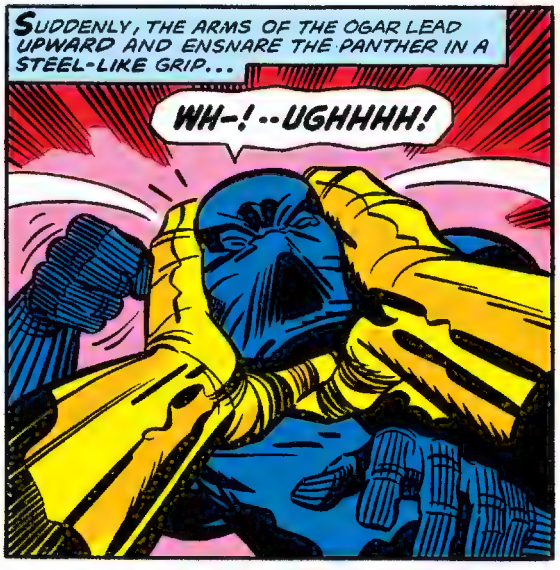

AT THAT MOMENT, THE BLACK PANTHER IS EXPENDING EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH TO FELL THE OMINOUS GUARDIAN OF THE FABLED CRYPT...
WHAM!
UGH!--HE WON'T GO DOWN!
BAM!

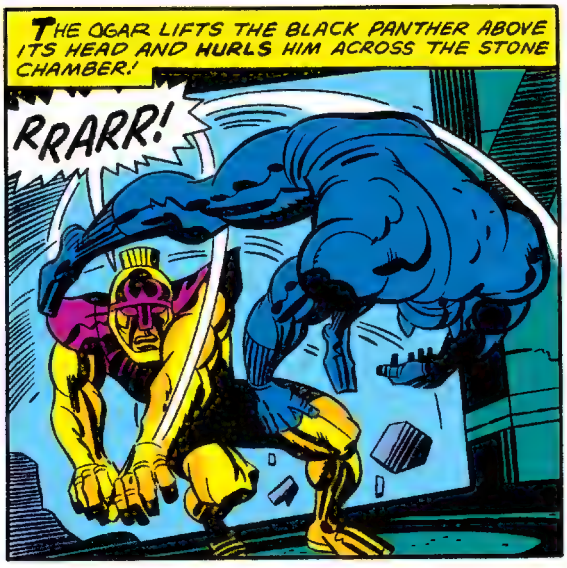

IT SWIFTLY BECOMES A BATTLE OF TITANS! --ONE, HUMAN, AND THE OTHER A PRODUCT OF THE MYSTIC ARTS--FASHIONED BY SKILLS NOW LOST IN ANTIQUITY!
AARRR!!
I'LL MAKE AN END RUN AND TRY TO THROW HIM OFF BALANCE!

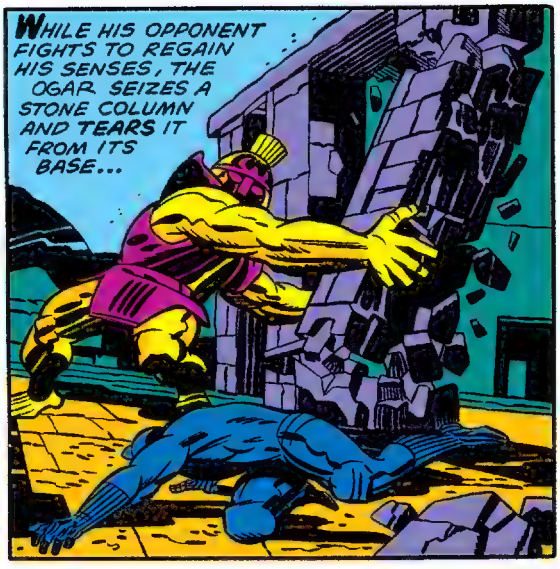

ONCE BEHIND HIS ADVERSARY, THE BLACK PANTHER STRIKES!
KRAK!

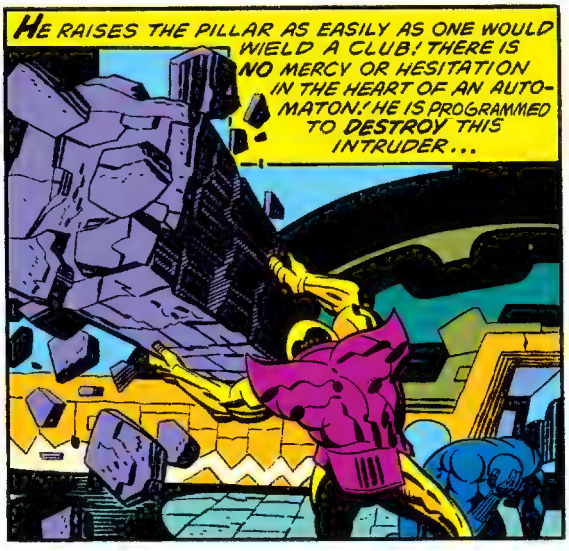

KLANG!


NOW, MISTER BIG, I THINK I CAN DELIVER A KNOCKOUT PUNCH FROM THIS ANGLE--AND PUT YOU ON ICE!!
I'VE NEED OF ONE OF YOUR DECEASED MASTER'S PRIZE POSSESSIONS!

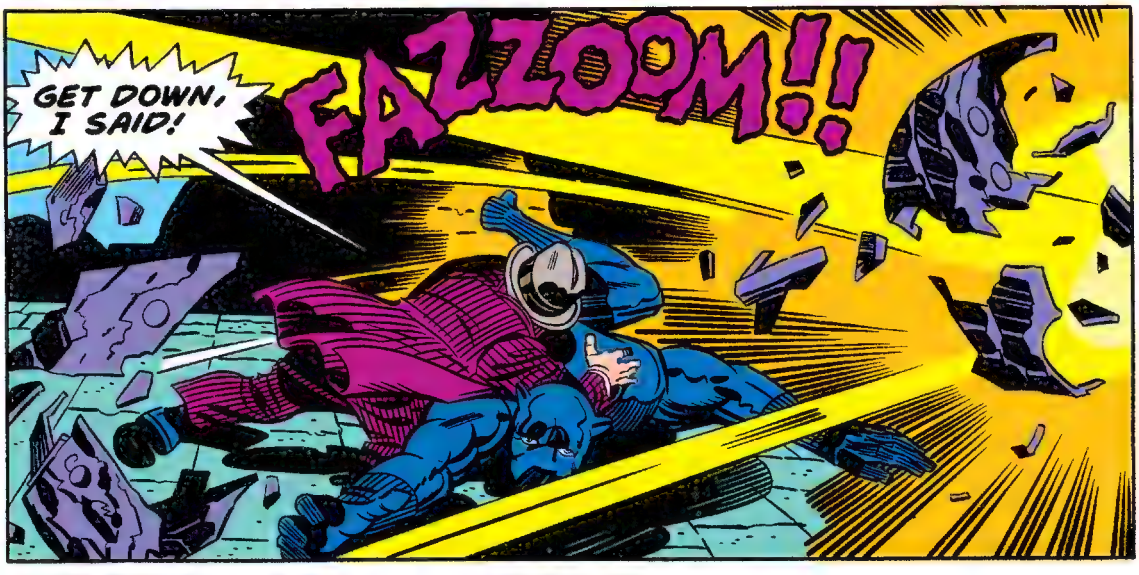

SUDDENLY, THE ARMS OF THE OGAR LEAD UPWARD AND ENSNARE THE PANTHER IN A STEEL-LIKE GRIP...
WH-!--UGHHHH!


THE OGAR LIFTS THE BLACK PANTHER ABOVE ITS HEAD AND HURLS HIM ACROSS THE STONE CHAMBER!
RRARR!

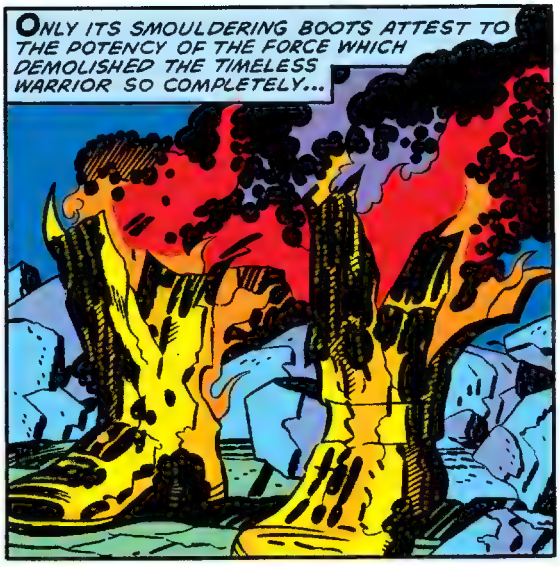

WHILE HIS OPPONENT FIGHTS TO REGAIN HIS SENSES, THE OGAR SEIZES A STONE COLUMN AND TEARS IT FROM ITS BASE...

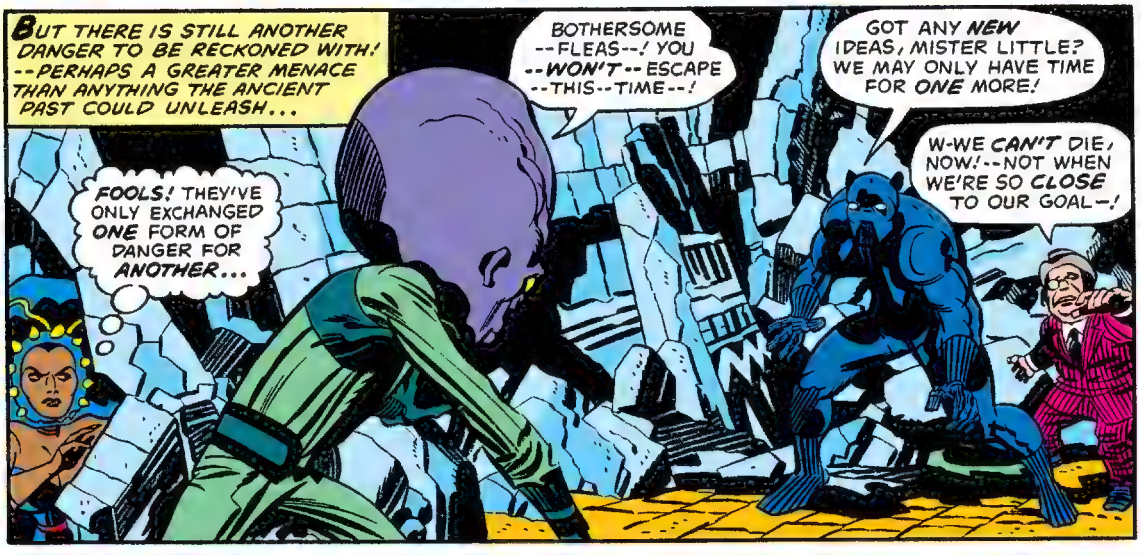

HE RAISES THE PILLAR AS EASILY AS ONE WOULD WIELD A CLUB! THERE IS NO MERCY OR HESITATION IN THE HEART OF AN AUTOMATON! HE IS PROGRAMMED TO DESTROY THIS INTRUDER...

SUDDENLY, MISTER LITTLE RACES INTO VIEW -- WITH HIS GIANT PURSUER RELENTLESSLY ON HIS TRAIL!
I'LL BE STRUCK BY THAT PILLAR! CAN'T GET OUT OF ITS WAY!
PANTHER! GET DOWN! -- QUICKLY--!

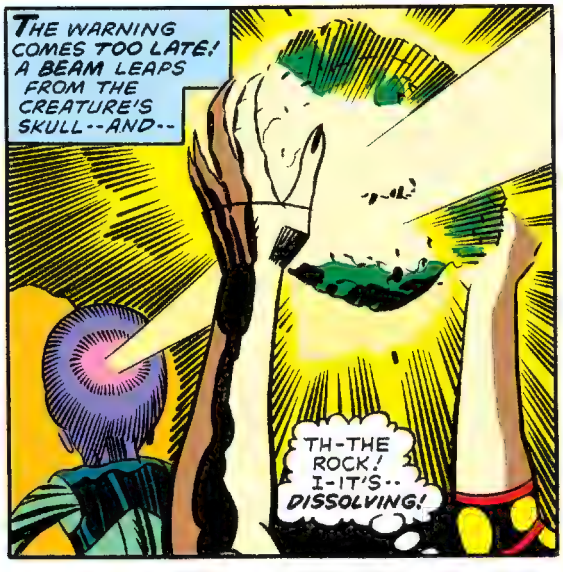

GET DOWN, I SAID!
FAZZOOM!!

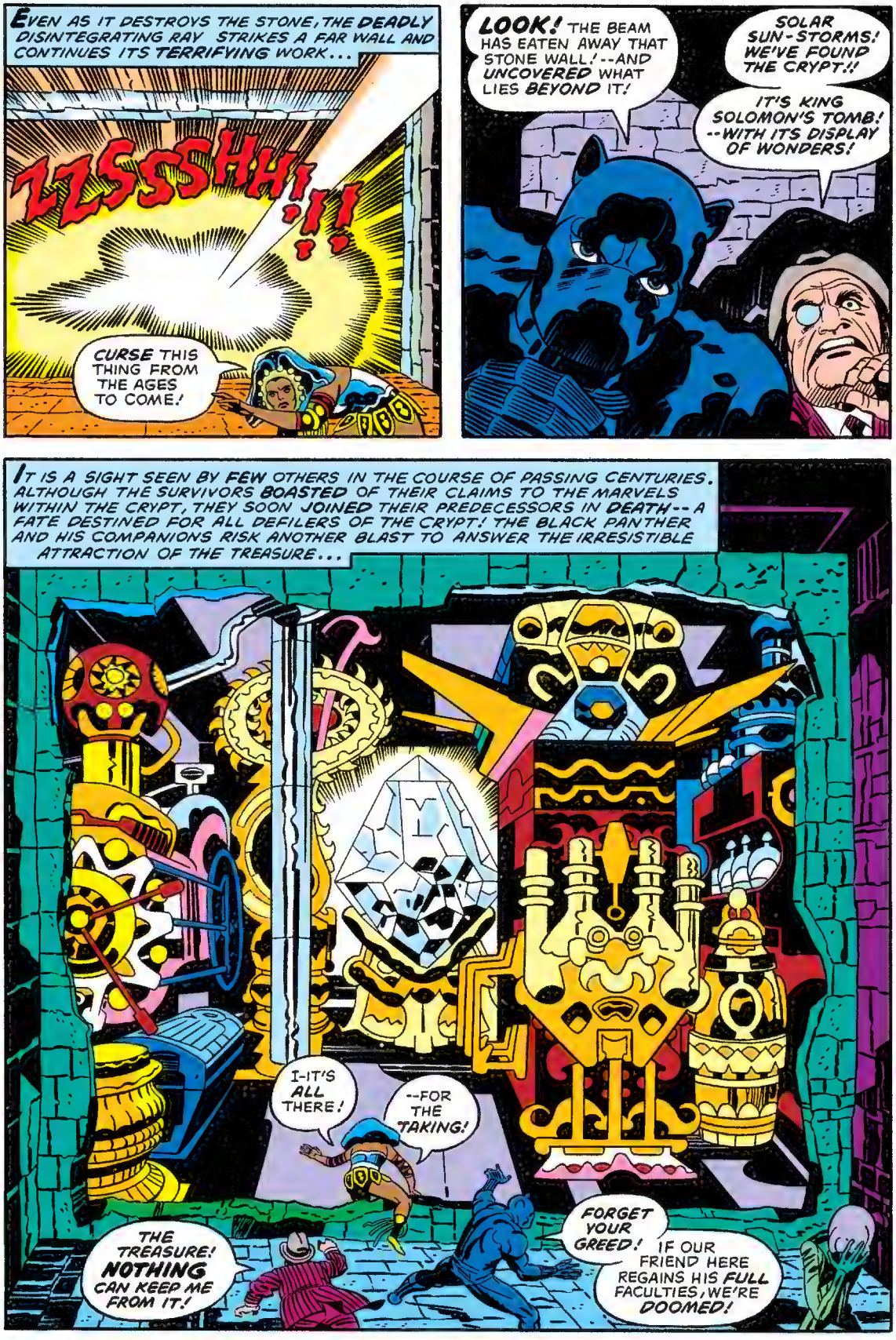
SECONDS LATER...
WH-WHAT WAS THAT!? WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GUARDIAN OF THE TOMB!!
HE'S GONE!
BY THE MOONS OF JUPITER, SO HE IS--! MY THOUSAND TO ONE CHANCE--IT PAID OFF!

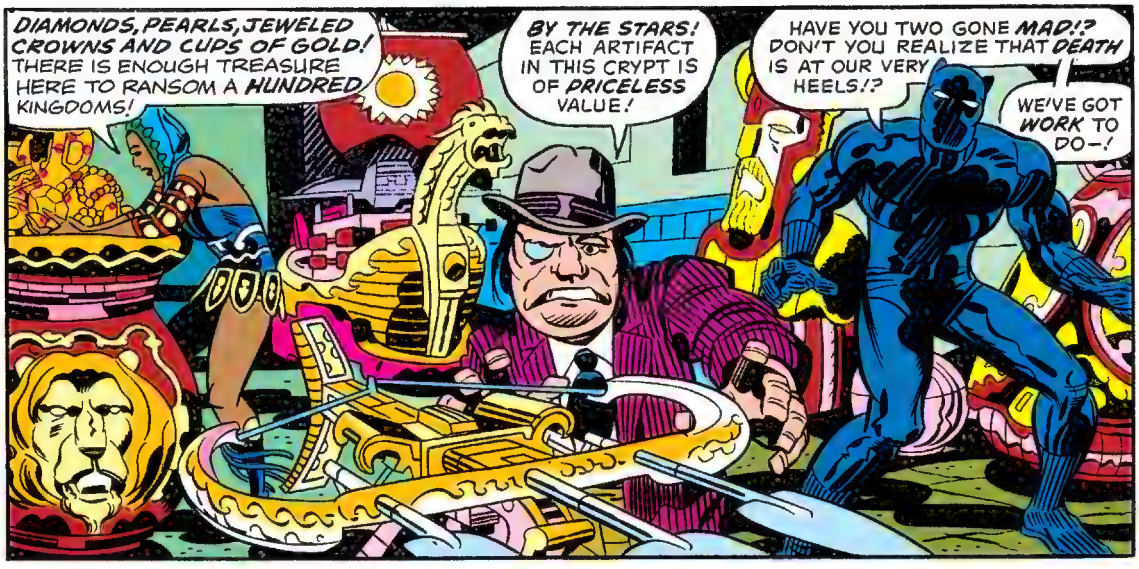

ONLY ITS SMOULDERING BOOTS ATTEST TO THE POTENCY OF THE FORCE WHICH DEMOLISHED THE TIMELESS WARRIOR SO COMPLETELY...


BUT THERE IS STILL ANOTHER DANGER TO BE RECKONED WITH! --PERHAPS A GREATER MENACE THAN ANYTHING THE ANCIENT PAST COULD UNLEASH...
FOOLS! THEY'VE ONLY EXCHANGED ONE FORM OF DANGER FOR ANOTHER...
BOTHERSOME --FLEAS--! YOU --WON'T-- ESCAPE --THIS--TIME--!
GOT ANY NEW IDEAS, MISTER LITTLE? WE MAY ONLY HAVE TIME FOR ONE MORE!
W-WE CAN'T DIE, NOW!--NOT WHEN WE'RE SO CLOSE TO OUR GOAL--!

PRINCESS ZANDA SUDDENLY DARTS FROM HIDING. SHE HOLDS A LARGE STONE HIGH ABOVE HER HEAD...
I'LL STOP HIM!
ZANDA!!
DROP IT AND RUN!
HE'S GOT A DISINTEGRATOR EYE IN THE BACK OF HIS HEAD!


THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE! A BEAM LEAPS FROM THE CREATURE'S SKULL--AND--
TH-THE ROCK! I-IT'S-- DISSOLVING!

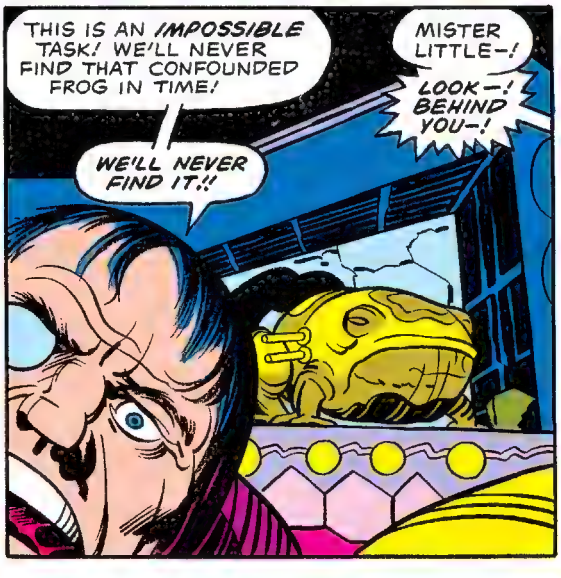

EVEN AS IT DESTROYS THE STONE, THE DEADLY DISINTEGRATING RAY STRIKES A FAR WALL AND CONTINUES ITS TERRIFYING WORK...
ZZSSSHH!!!
CURSE THIS THING FROM THE AGES TO COME!
LOOK! THE BEAM HAS EATEN AWAY THAT STONE WALL!--AND UNCOVERED WHAT LIES BEYOND IT!
SOLAR SUN-STORMS! WE'VE FOUND THE CRYPT!!
IT'S KING SOLOMON'S TOMB! --WITH ITS DISPLAY OF WONDERS!
IT IS A SIGHT SEEN BY FEW OTHERS IN THE COURSE OF PASSING CENTURIES. ALTHOUGH THE SURVIVORS BOASTED OF THEIR CLAIMS TO THE MARVELS WITHIN THE CRYPT, THEY SOON JOINED THEIR PREDECESSORS IN DEATH--A FATE DESTINED FOR ALL DEFILERS OF THE CRYPT! THE BLACK PANTHER AND HIS COMPANIONS RISK ANOTHER BLAST TO ANSWER THE IRRESISTIBLE ATTRACTION OF THE TREASURE...
I-IT'S ALL THERE!
--FOR THE TAKING!
THE TREASURE! NOTHING CAN KEEP ME FROM IT!
FORGET YOUR GREED! IF OUR FRIEND HERE REGAINS HIS FULL FACULTIES, WE'RE DOOMED!


DIAMONDS, PEARLS, JEWELED CROWNS AND CUPS OF GOLD! THERE IS ENOUGH TREASURE HERE TO RANSOM A HUNDRED KINGDOMS!
BY THE STARS! EACH ARTIFACT IN THIS CRYPT IS OF PRICELESS VALUE!
HAVE YOU TWO GONE MAD!? DON'T YOU REALIZE THAT DEATH IS AT OUR VERY HEELS!?
WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO--!

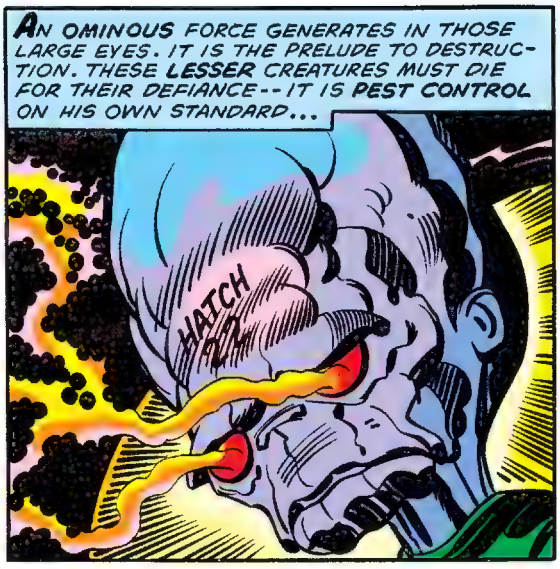
A GRIM REMINDER COMES A SPLIT SECOND LATER! THE CHAMBER IS ROCKED BY A SHARP EXPLOSION...
UGH--!
BAAM!
LET'S MAKE TRACKS!

ASSISTING HIS TWO STUNNED COMPANIONS, THE BLACK PANTHER RETREATS INTO THE INNER RECESSES OF THE TREASURE CHAMBER...
I-IT ISN'T FAIR! THAT THING WILL DESTROY EVERY-THING!
NOT IF WE CAN FIND THE TWIN TO THE BRASS FROG MISTER LITTLE CARRIES ON HIS PERSON!
WAHOOM!!

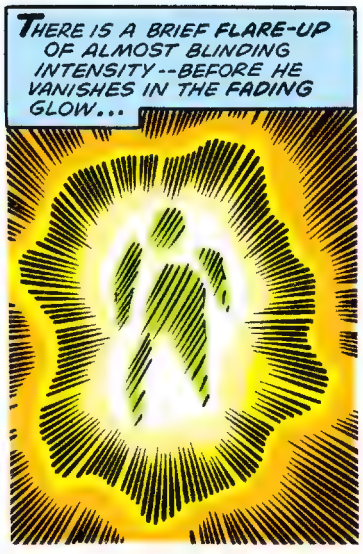
URGENCY SPARKS A DESPERATE SEARCH! THE BELEAGURED TRIO RACES DOOM TO THE FINISH LINE...
KEEP LOOKING! TIME'S RUNNING OUT!
WHERE IS IT-- WHERE IS IT!?


THIS IS AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK! WE'LL NEVER FIND THAT CONFOUNDED FROG IN TIME!
WE'LL NEVER FIND IT!!
MISTER LITTLE--!
LOOK--! BEHIND YOU--!

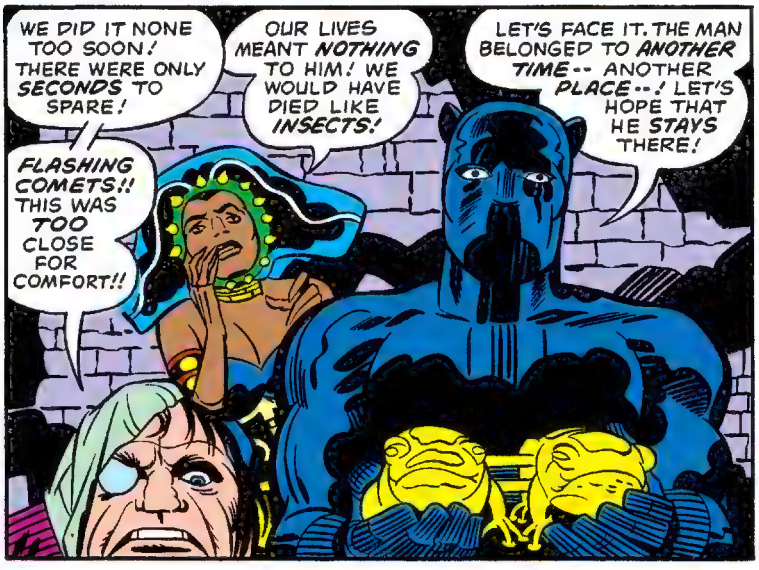
MEANWHILE, THE MAN FROM THE FUTURE HAS ENTERED THE CHAMBER--FULLY RECOVERED --AND BENT ON VENGEANCE!!
I NEED NOT SEEK YOU OUT!--I KNOW WHERE YOU ARE! MY BRAIN HAS PROBED THIS CHAMBER AND FOUND YOU!

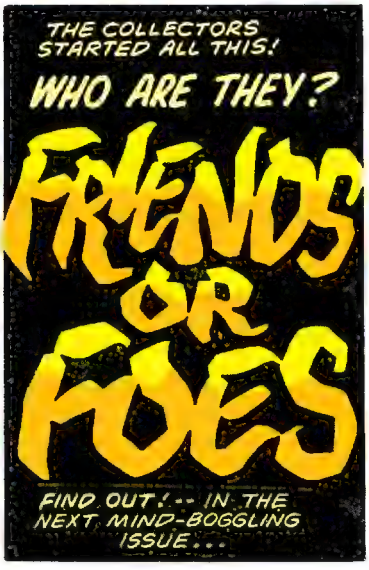

AN OMINOUS FORCE GENERATES IN THOSE LARGE EYES. IT IS THE PRELUDE TO DESTRUCTION. THESE LESSER CREATURES MUST DIE FOR THEIR DEFIANCE--IT IS PEST CONTROL ON HIS OWN STANDARD...
HATCH

BUT WHEN HE COMES IN SIGHT OF THE CREATURES, TWO BEAMS ENVELOP HIM IN A NIMBUS OF LIGHT...
ZZSSH!!!


THERE IS A BRIEF FLARE-UP OF ALMOST BLINDING INTENSITY--BEFORE HE VANISHES IN THE FADING GLOW...

WE'VE DONE IT! BY CONNECTING THESE TWO BRASS FROGS, A COMPLETE CIRCUIT WAS CREATED THAT COULD SEND HIM BACK TO HIS OWN TIME!


WE DID IT NONE TOO SOON! THERE WERE ONLY SECONDS TO SPARE!
OUR LIVES MEANT NOTHING TO HIM! WE WOULD HAVE DIED LIKE INSECTS!
LET'S FACE IT. THE MAN BELONGED TO ANOTHER TIME-- ANOTHER PLACE--! LET'S HOPE THAT HE STAYS THERE!
FLASHING COMETS!! THIS WAS TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT!!


THE COLLECTORS STARTED ALL THIS!
WHO ARE THEY?
FRIENDS OR FOES
FIND OUT!-- IN THE NEXT MIND-BOGGLING ISSUE...

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EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • LETTERED AND INKED BY **MIKE ROYER** • COLORED BY **I. VARTANOFF** • ADMIRED BY **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

DEEP IN THE CORE OF THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS, THE SECRET BURIAL CHAMBER OF KING SOLOMON HAS YIELDED ONE DEADLY SURPRISE AFTER ANOTHER. IT IS A PLACE OF WONDERS NOT MEANT TO BE TOUCHED, YET VIOLATORS THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES HAVE DARED ITS DANGERS. THEY'VE DONE IT FOR GREED, PROFIT, AND THE STRANGE COMPULSION TO OWN THE RAREST OF POSSESSIONS! THE COLLECTORS HAVE ENSNARLED THE BLACK PANTHER!... ARE THEY --
FRIENDS OR FOES
STAND ASIDE, MISTER LITTLE! THIS STATUE HAS COME TO LIFE!
GALLOPING GALAXIES!!

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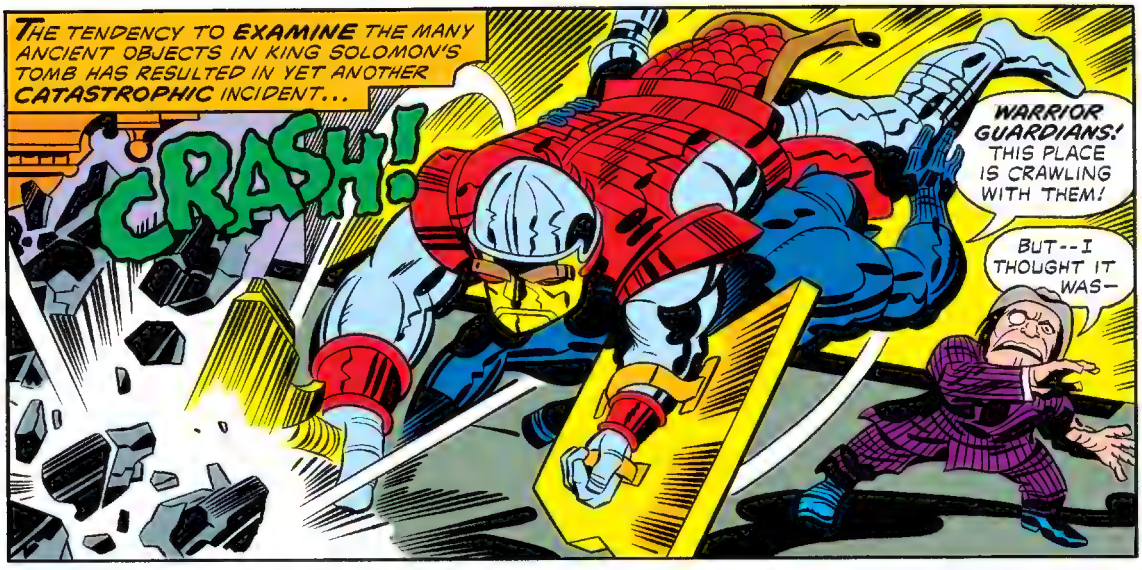
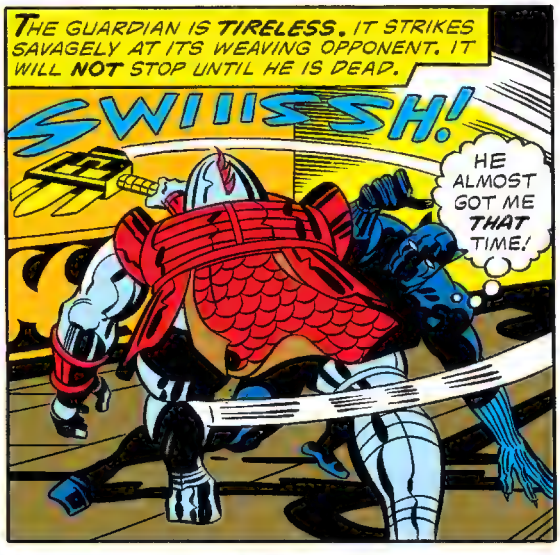
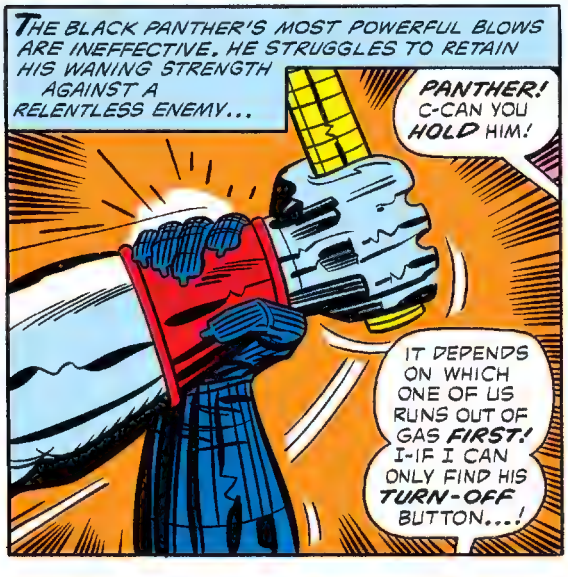
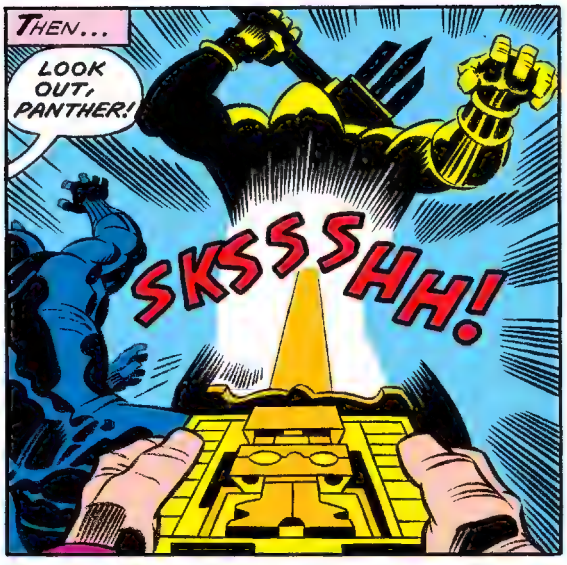

THE TENDENCY TO EXAMINE THE MANY ANCIENT OBJECTS IN KING SOLOMON'S TOMB HAS RESULTED IN YET ANOTHER CATASTROPHIC INCIDENT...
CRASH!
WARRIOR GUARDIANS! THIS PLACE IS CRAWLING WITH THEM!
BUT--I THOUGHT IT WAS—

YOU WERE WRONG! THIS IS A KILLER MECHANISM, DESIGNED IN THE HUMAN IMAGE TO DESTROY DEFILERS OF THE TOMB!
FOOL! IT WAS ENOUGH TO ACTIVATE IT!
I-I MERELY TOUCHED IT! T-THAT'S ALL I DID!

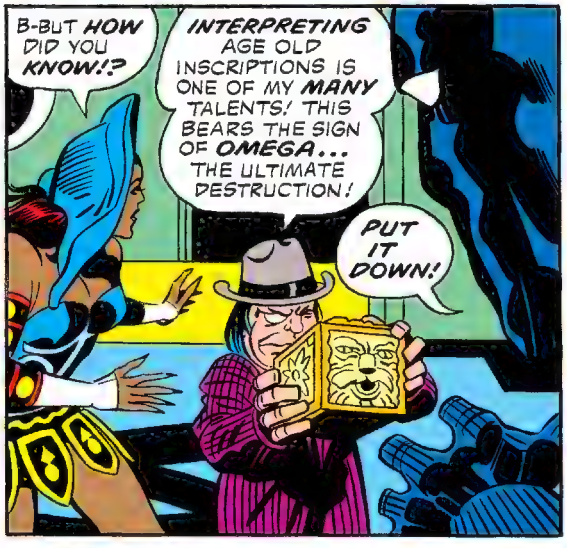

THE GUARDIAN IS TIRELESS. IT STRIKES SAVAGELY AT ITS WEAVING OPPONENT. IT WILL NOT STOP UNTIL HE IS DEAD.
SWIIISSH!
HE ALMOST GOT ME THAT TIME!


THE BLACK PANTHER'S MOST POWERFUL BLOWS ARE INEFFECTIVE. HE STRUGGLES TO RETAIN HIS WANING STRENGTH AGAINST A RELENTLESS ENEMY...
PANTHER! C-CAN YOU HOLD HIM!
IT DEPENDS ON WHICH ONE OF US RUNS OUT OF GAS FIRST! I-IF I CAN ONLY FIND HIS TURN-OFF BUTTON...!

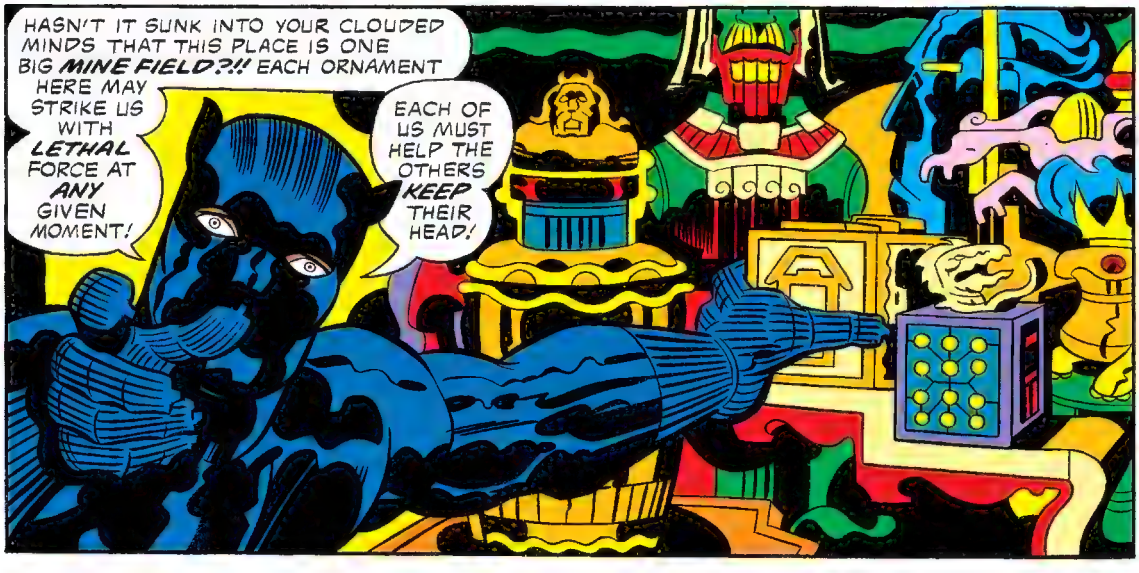
HE'S NOT GOING TO MAKE IT! OUR ONLY CHANCE MAY BE TO RUN!
I'M TESTING ANOTHER OF THESE OBJECTS! DON'T INTERFERE, PRINCESS ZANDA!
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW !?


THEN...
LOOK OUT, PANTHER!
SKSSSHH!

WHA-!?
THAT THING JUST FADED AWAY!
NATURALLY, MY DEAR. IT WAS SIMPLY DISINTE-GRATED BY THE POWER IN THIS ANCIENT ORNAMENTAL BOX!
A DISINTEGRATOR! WHO'D HAVE GUESSED THAT THE OLD CIVILIZATIONS HAD IT!

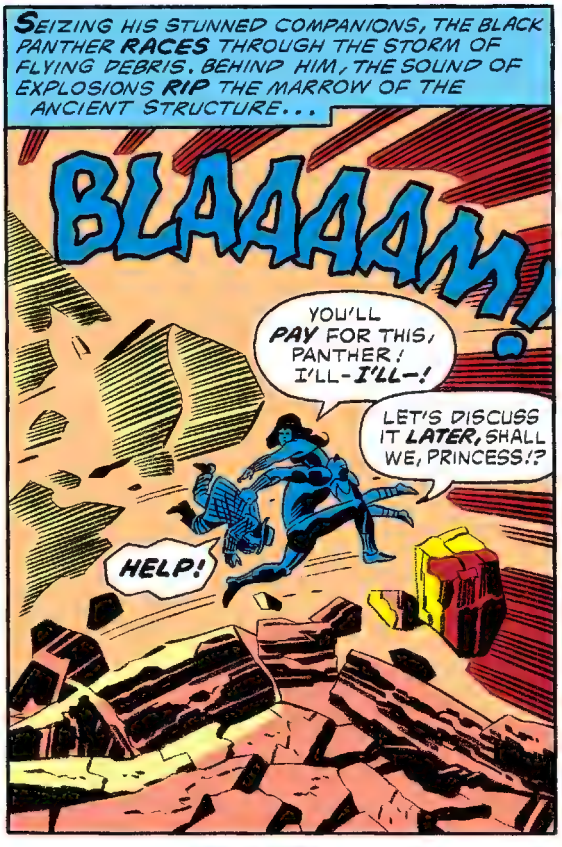

B-BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW!?
INTERPRETING AGE OLD INSCRIPTIONS IS ONE OF MY MANY TALENTS! THIS BEARS THE SIGN OF OMEGA... THE ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION!
PUT IT DOWN!

SEE HERE, YOUNG FELLOW! YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO SNATCH THAT ARTIFACT! IT'S MINE -- BY RIGHT OF POSSESSION!
YOU TWO COLLECTORS HAVE MEDDLED ENOUGH WITH THE OBJECTS IN THIS TOMB!


HASN'T IT SUNK INTO YOUR CLOUDED MINDS THAT THIS PLACE IS ONE BIG MINE FIELD?!! EACH ORNAMENT HERE MAY STRIKE US WITH LETHAL FORCE AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT!
EACH OF US MUST HELP THE OTHERS KEEP THEIR HEAD!

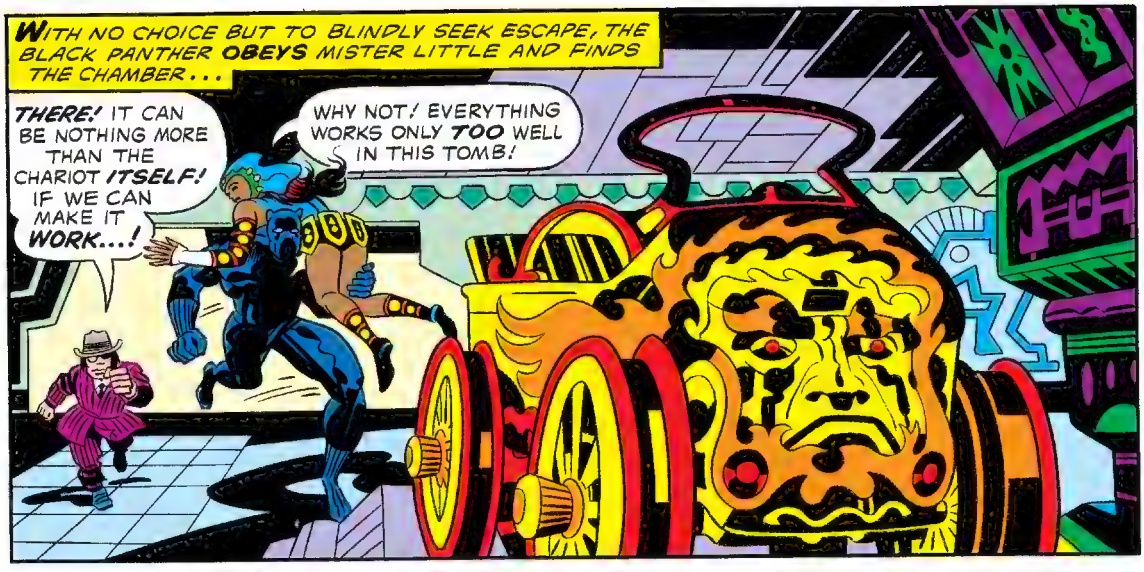
BY SATURN'S RINGS, YOU'RE RIGHT! WE CAME HERE TO RETURN THESE BRASS FROGS TO THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE, AND THAT'S WHAT I SHALL DO!
IS THAT SO!?
YES, THAT'S SO! ABNER LITTLE IS PRONE TO THE COLLECTOR'S SYNDRONE, BUT HE DOES KEEP HIS WORD!
WELL, I MADE NO SUCH PROMISE! I CLAIM THEM AS MINE!
HAVE A CARE, PANTHER! I WON'T GIVE THIS UP WITHOUT A STRUGGLE! IT'S A TIME-MACHINE! THE ONLY ONE IN EXISTENCE!
BETTER THAT IT RESTS HERE, THAN CREATE MISCHIEF IN THE WORLD OUTSIDE!
GIVE IT TO ME, ZANDA!
DO YOU THINK I'LL LET IT ROT HERE FOR ALL ETERNITY!
NO! NO!
DON'T THROW IT! Y-YOU MIGHT--
--I'M SICK OF PLAYING NURSEMAID TO YOUR WHIMS! I HOPE IT SHATTERS INTO A MILLION PIECES!
AND WHEN IT DOES...
WAAAMM!!

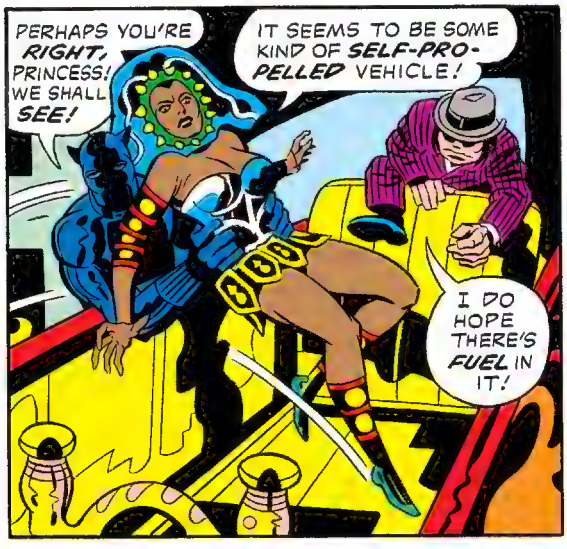
THE EERIE TOMB IS SUDDENLY SHAKEN BY GREAT SEISMIC SHOCKS. CRACKS APPEAR IN THE MIGHTY STONE. IT GROANS AND SWAYS, AND THEN IT BEGINS TO FALL APART...
RRUMMBLE!!
SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE! THE TOMB WILL BE BURIED BY THIS CAVE-IN!
SO MAY WE! LET'S GO, YOU TWO!
STARS AND COMETS!

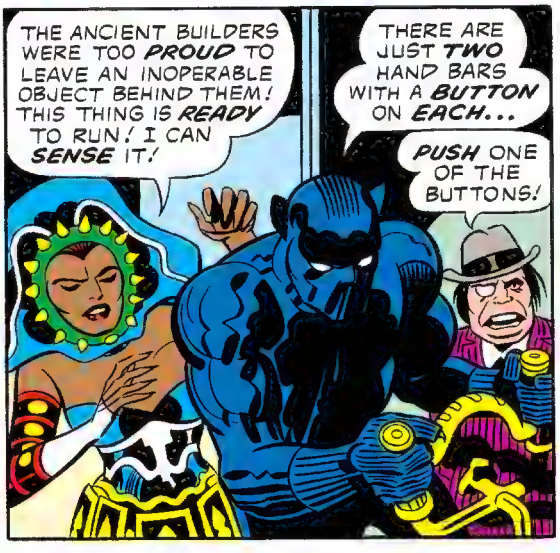

SEIZING HIS STUNNED COMPANIONS, THE BLACK PANTHER RACES THROUGH THE STORM OF FLYING DEBRIS. BEHIND HIM, THE SOUND OF EXPLOSIONS RIP THE MARROW OF THE ANCIENT STRUCTURE...
BLAAAAM!
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS, PANTHER! I'LL-I'LL-!
LET'S DISCUSS IT LATER, SHALL WE, PRINCESS!?
HELP!

PRECIOUS METALS... COFFERS OVERFLOWING WITH JEWELS...! MACHINES OF PRICELESS VALUE! ALL THIS WILL BE LOST FOREVER WHEN THIS IS OVER!
I'D GIVE A THOUGHT TO OUR LIVES TOO! WE MAY BE DEAD BEFORE WE FIND AN EXIT FROM THIS MAZE!

TURN LEFT, PANTHER --TO THE ROOM OF THE FLAME CHARIOT! I'VE SEEN IT MARKED ON A MAP IN YOUR GRANDFATHER'S POSSESSION!
DO AS HE SAYS! THE LITTLE GNAT IS AN EXPERT ON OLD MAPS!

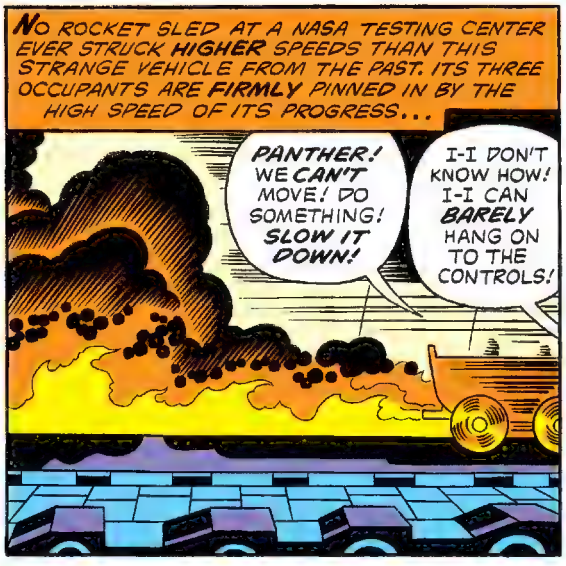

WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO BLINDLY SEEK ESCAPE, THE BLACK PANTHER OBEYS MISTER LITTLE AND FINDS THE CHAMBER...
THERE! IT CAN BE NOTHING MORE THAN THE CHARIOT ITSELF! IF WE CAN MAKE IT WORK...!
WHY NOT! EVERYTHING WORKS ONLY TOO WELL IN THIS TOMB!

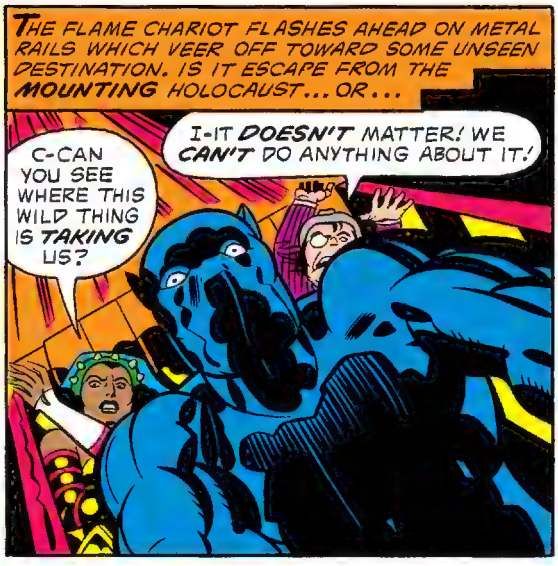

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, PRINCESS! WE SHALL SEE!
IT SEEMS TO BE SOME KIND OF SELF-PROPELLED VEHICLE!
I DO HOPE THERE'S FUEL IN IT!

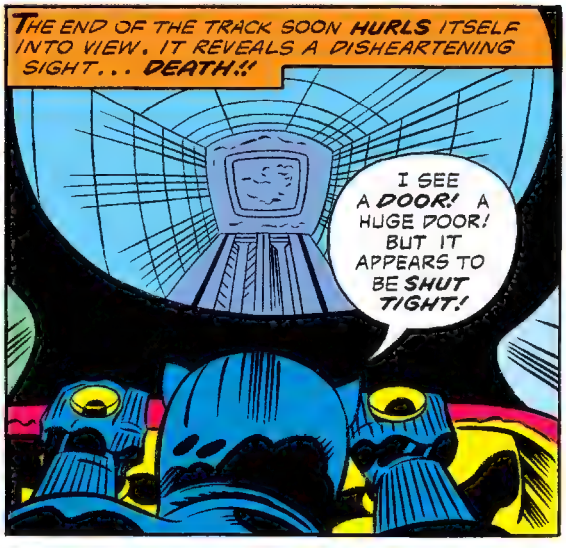

THE ANCIENT BUILDERS WERE TOO PROUD TO LEAVE AN INOPERABLE OBJECT BEHIND THEM! THIS THING IS READY TO RUN! I CAN SENSE IT!
THERE ARE JUST TWO HAND BARS WITH A BUTTON ON EACH...
PUSH ONE OF THE BUTTONS!

DON'T CROWD ME, MISTER LITTLE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS THING CAN DO!
IF I PUSH THE WRONG BUTTON, I COULD POSSIBLY BLOW US AND THIS WAGON TO KINGDOM COME!
HOWEVER, TIME IS SHORT!
HERE WE GO!!

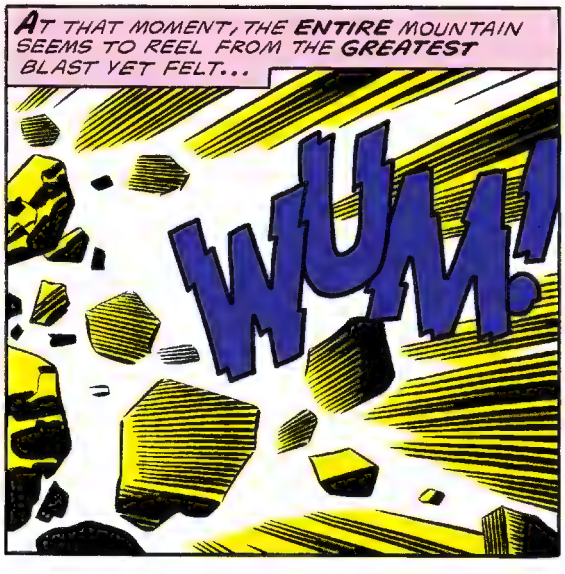
AS THE PANTHER'S THUMB DESCENDS ON THE LEFT-HAND KNOB, THERE ARE TWO SPURTS OF HOT FLAME AND A RUSH OF AIR...
I-IT'S MOVING! LIKE THE WIND!

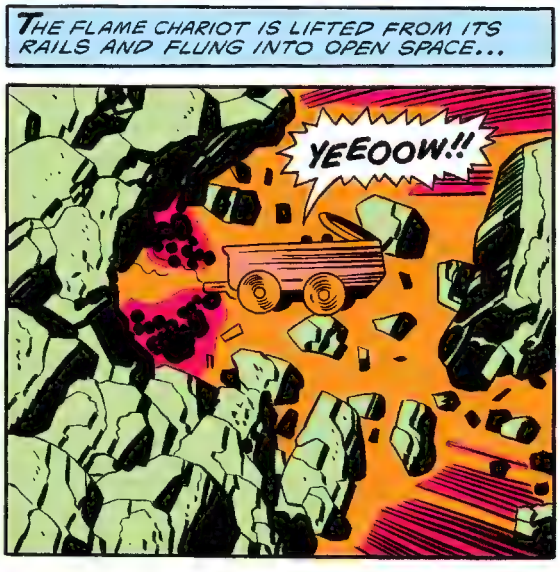

NO ROCKET SLED AT A NASA TESTING CENTER EVER STRUCK HIGHER SPEEDS THAN THIS STRANGE VEHICLE FROM THE PAST. ITS THREE OCCUPANTS ARE FIRMLY PINNED IN BY THE HIGH SPEED OF ITS PROGRESS...
PANTHER! WE CAN'T MOVE! DO SOMETHING! SLOW IT DOWN!
I-I DON'T KNOW HOW! I-I CAN BARELY HANG ON TO THE CONTROLS!

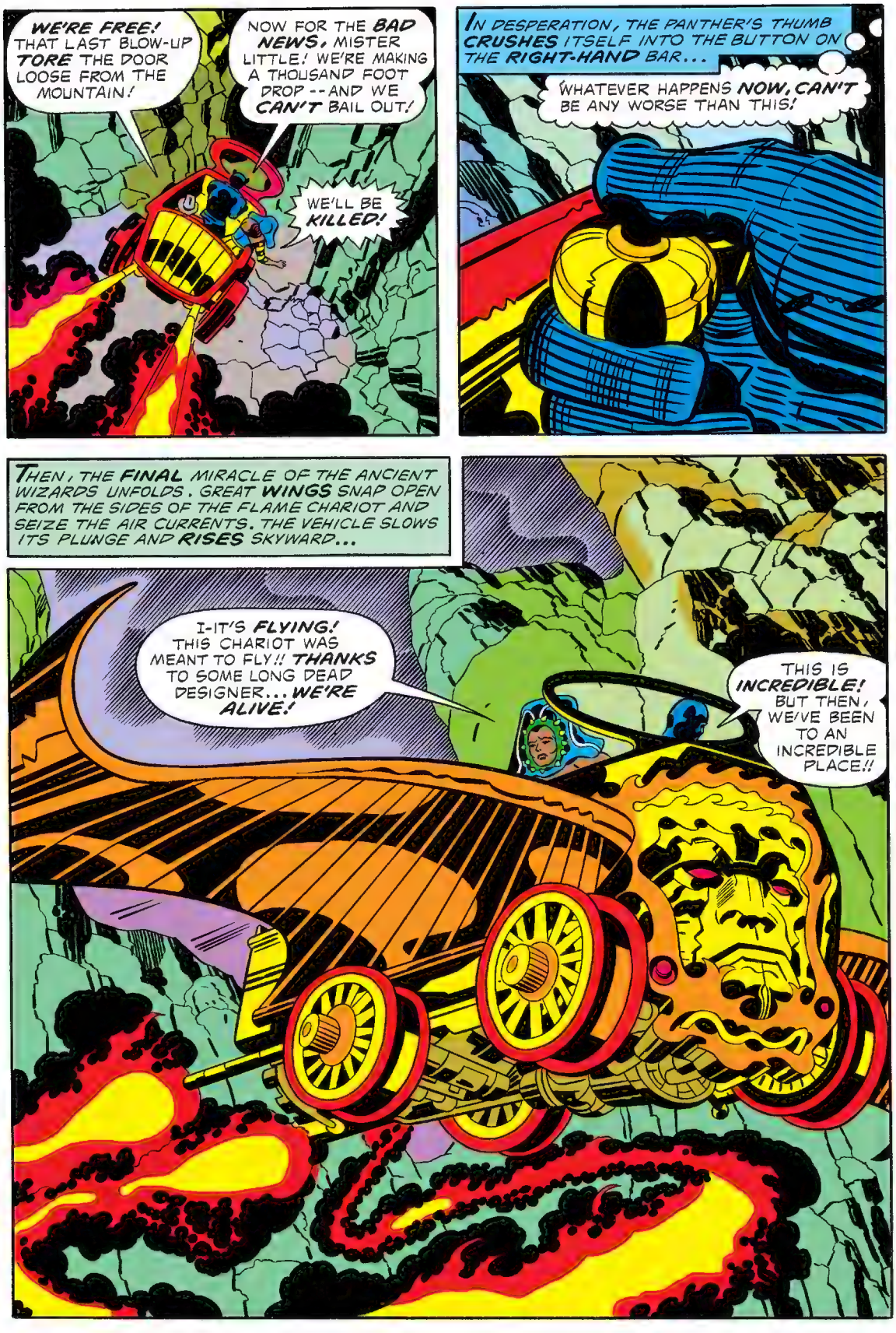

THE FLAME CHARIOT FLASHES AHEAD ON METAL RAILS WHICH VEER OFF TOWARD SOME UNSEEN DESTINATION. IS IT ESCAPE FROM THE MOUNTING HOLOCAUST... OR...
C-CAN YOU SEE WHERE THIS WILD THING IS TAKING US?
I-IT DOESN'T MATTER! WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!


THE END OF THE TRACK SOON HURLS ITSELF INTO VIEW. IT REVEALS A DISHEARTENING SIGHT... DEATH!!
I SEE A DOOR! A HUGE DOOR! BUT IT APPEARS TO BE SHUT TIGHT!

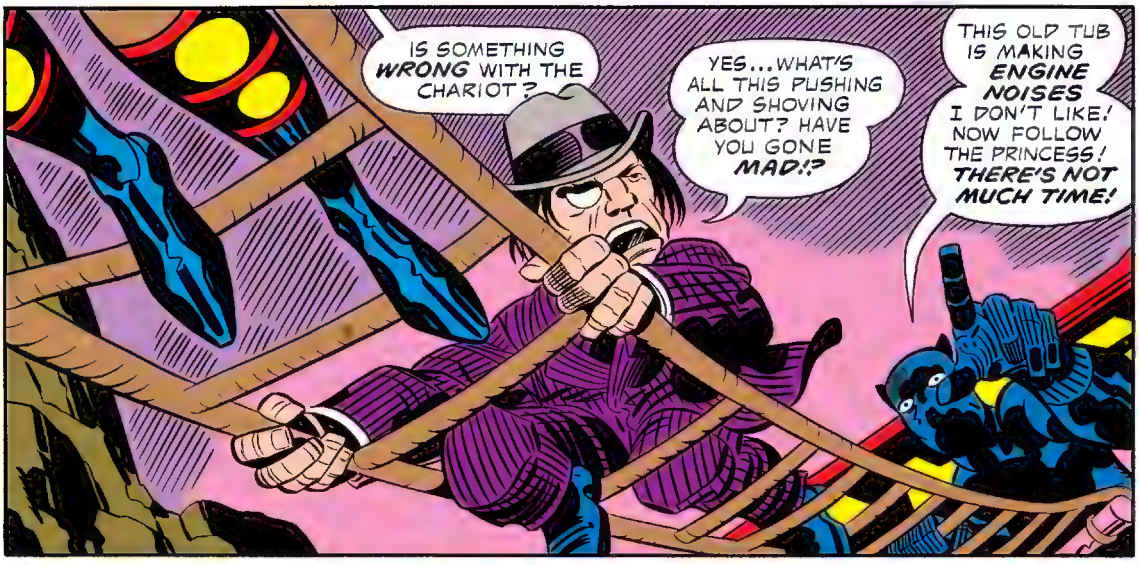
IT MUST BE MEANT TO OPEN AT THE CHARIOT'S APPROACH! WHY IS IT SHUT!?
IT'S BEEN JAMMED CLOSED BY THE EXPLOSIONS!
I THINK WE'VE HAD IT, FRIENDS!
WE'RE GOING TO HIT!

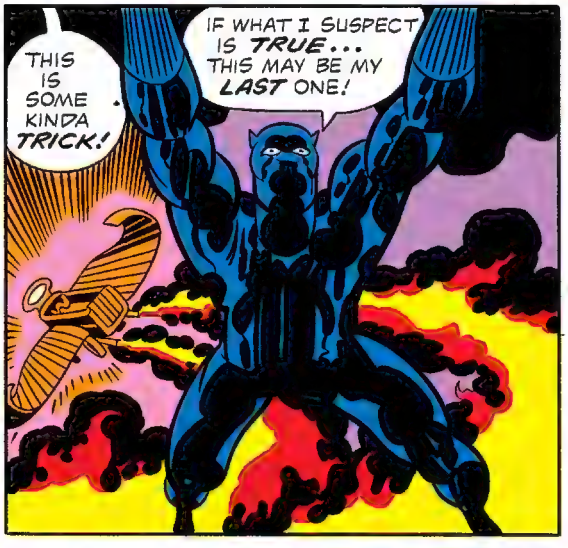

AT THAT MOMENT, THE ENTIRE MOUNTAIN SEEMS TO REEL FROM THE GREATEST BLAST YET FELT...
WUM!


THE FLAME CHARIOT IS LIFTED FROM ITS RAILS AND FLUNG INTO OPEN SPACE...
YEEOOW!!

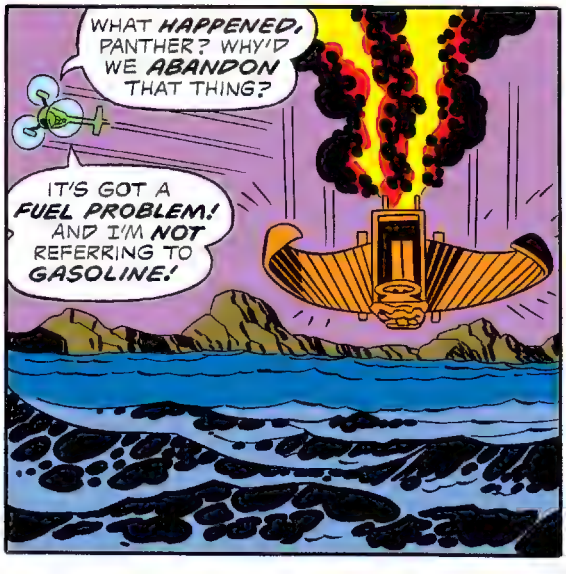

WE'RE FREE! THAT LAST BLOW-UP TORE THE DOOR LOOSE FROM THE MOUNTAIN!
NOW FOR THE BAD NEWS, MISTER LITTLE! WE'RE MAKING A THOUSAND FOOT DROP -- AND WE CAN'T BAIL OUT!
WE'LL BE KILLED!
IN DESPERATION, THE PANTHER'S THUMB CRUSHES ITSELF INTO THE BUTTON ON THE RIGHT-HAND BAR...
WHATEVER HAPPENS NOW, CAN'T BE ANY WORSE THAN THIS!
THEN, THE FINAL MIRACLE OF THE ANCIENT WIZARDS UNFOLDS. GREAT WINGS SNAP OPEN FROM THE SIDES OF THE FLAME CHARIOT AND SEIZE THE AIR CURRENTS. THE VEHICLE SLOWS ITS PLUNGE AND RISES SKYWARD...
I-IT'S FLYING! THIS CHARIOT WAS MEANT TO FLY!! THANKS TO SOME LONG DEAD DESIGNER... WE'RE ALIVE!
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! BUT THEN, WE'VE BEEN TO AN INCREDIBLE PLACE!!

THIS VEHICLE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT COULD FLY, BUT ITS DOING A GOOD JOB OF IT!
UGH! WE'D NEVER HAVE SURVIVED A CRASH AMONG THOSE HOSTILE ROCKS BELOW!
AT ANY RATE, KING SOLOMON'S TOMB IS NOW SO SECURELY BURIED IT MAY NEVER BE FOUND AGAIN!
THANKS TO YOU AND YOUR PRINCIPLES, BLACK PANTHER! BUT... YOU UNDERESTIMATE THE COLLECTORS!
THAT'S WHAT HE'S AFRAID OF, PRINCESS ZANDA!
OUR RESOURCES ARE ENDLESS, EH, MISTER LITTLE? WE ACQUIRE POWER ...ONLY TO SEEK OUT THE TREASURES OF THIS WORLD!
WHA—!
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, ZANDA! I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
ARE YOU SURPRISED BY THE SIGHT OF MY JET-COPTER, PANTHER? I KNEW THAT IT WOULD MEET US THE MOMENT THAT WE LEFT THE MOUNTAIN!
YOUR MEN ARE LOYAL INDEED, PRINCESS!
I PAY MY ARMY OF SERVITORS WELL! THEY ARE ALWAYS ON HAND WHEN THEY'RE NEEDED!
YOU - YOU SCHEMING FEMALE! YOU INTENDED TO HIJACK WHATEVER WE FOUND IN THE BURIAL CHAMBER!
NEVER! DO YOU HEAR ME, ZANDA? NEVER!!
PRECISELY... AND I SHALL BE THERE TO CLAIM THIS VEHICLE WHEN YOU LAND IT!
WAIT! I THINK WE'D BETTER JOIN THE PRINCESS IN HER COPTER!

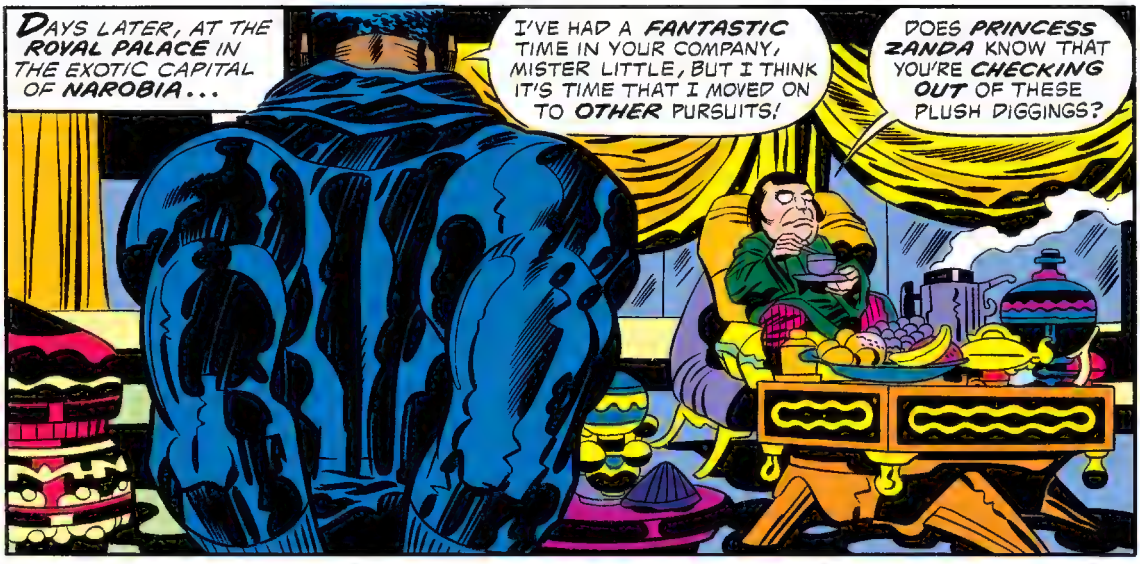

IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE CHARIOT?
YES...WHAT'S ALL THIS PUSHING AND SHOVING ABOUT? HAVE YOU GONE MAD!?
THIS OLD TUB IS MAKING ENGINE NOISES I DON'T LIKE! NOW FOLLOW THE PRINCESS! THERE'S NOT MUCH TIME!

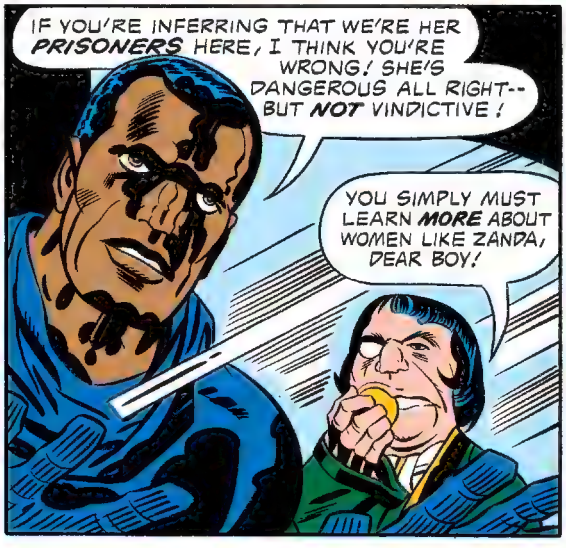

THIS IS SOME KINDA TRICK!
IF WHAT I SUSPECT IS TRUE... THIS MAY BE MY LAST ONE!

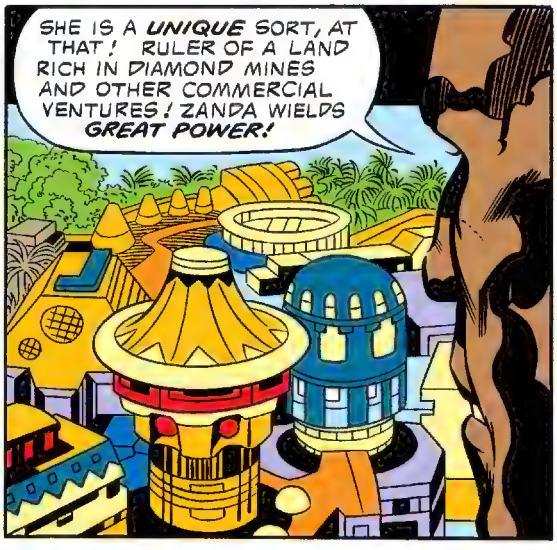
PILOT! THROW THIS CHOPPER INTO HIGH SPEED AND GET CLEAR OF THIS AREA! FAST!


WHAT HAPPENED, PANTHER? WHY'D WE ABANDON THAT THING?
IT'S GOT A FUEL PROBLEM! AND I'M NOT REFERRING TO GASOLINE!

HURRUUUMM!


DAYS LATER, AT THE ROYAL PALACE IN THE EXOTIC CAPITAL OF NAROBIA...
I'VE HAD A FANTASTIC TIME IN YOUR COMPANY, MISTER LITTLE, BUT I THINK IT'S TIME THAT I MOVED ON TO OTHER PURSUITS!
DOES PRINCESS ZANDA KNOW THAT YOU'RE CHECKING OUT OF THESE PLUSH DIGGINGS?


IF YOU'RE INFERRING THAT WE'RE HER PRISONERS HERE, I THINK YOU'RE WRONG! SHE'S DANGEROUS ALL RIGHT-- BUT NOT VINDICTIVE!
YOU SIMPLY MUST LEARN MORE ABOUT WOMEN LIKE ZANDA, DEAR BOY!

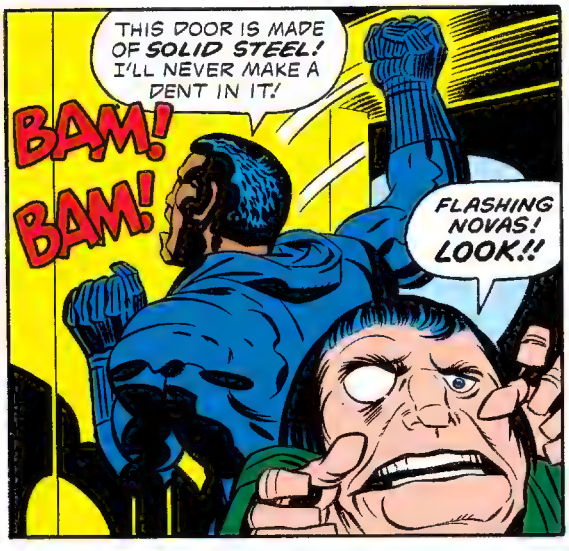

SHE IS A UNIQUE SORT, AT THAT! RULER OF A LAND RICH IN DIAMOND MINES AND OTHER COMMERCIAL VENTURES! ZANDA WIELDS GREAT POWER!

AND LEADS AN ARMY OF VERY OBNOXIOUS MERCENARIES!
YOU TWO ARE TO COME WITH US AT ONCE!
ARE YOU STILL CONVINCED THAT WE'RE GUESTS HERE?

A SHOW OF FORCE IS A COMMON GESTURE TO PEOPLE LIKE ZANDA! I'M CERTAIN WE'RE NOT BEING LED TO A FIRING SQUAD...
HMMPH! HER PLANS MAY ENTAIL SOMETHING FAR MORE DEVIOUS!

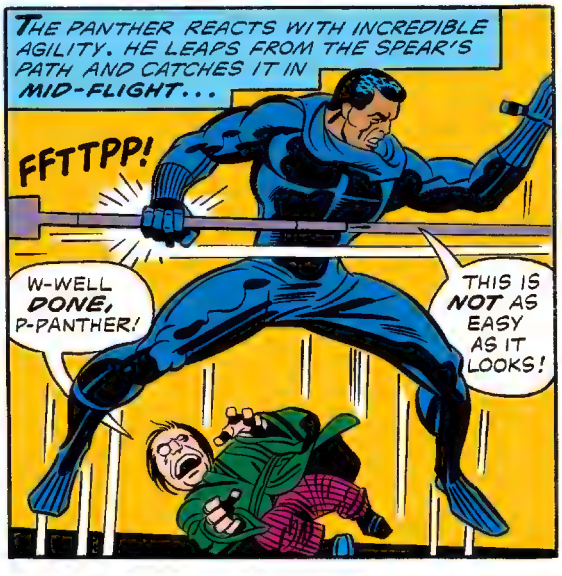
SUDDENLY, THE BLACK PANTHER AND HIS COMPANION ARE ROUGHLY PUSHED INTO A SMALL BARE ROOM...
IN HERE!
SOLAR STORMS AND FIRES!

THE DOOR IS THEN SHUT TIGHTLY BEHIND THEM WITH A FINALITY OF FRIGHTENING PORTENT...
I-I WARNED YOU, PANTHER! THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT ZANDA HAS IN STOR FOR US! ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN NOW!
PANIC IS THE FIRST THING TO AVOID! WE MUST BE READY FOR ANYTHING!

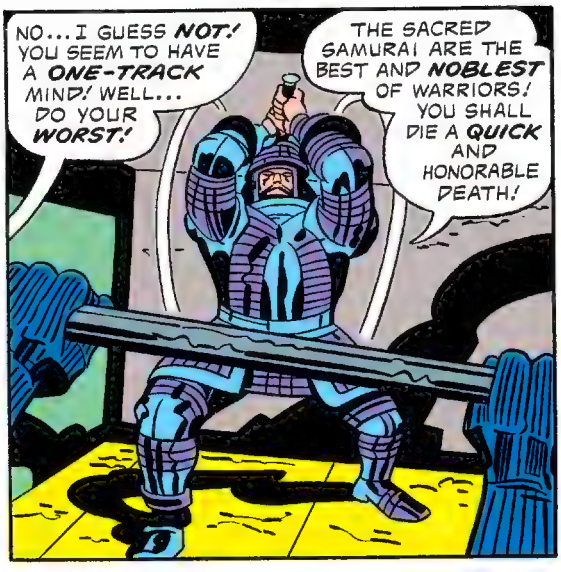

THIS DOOR IS MADE OF SOLID STEEL! I'LL NEVER MAKE A DENT IN IT!
BAM!
BAM!
FLASHING NOVAS! LOOK!!

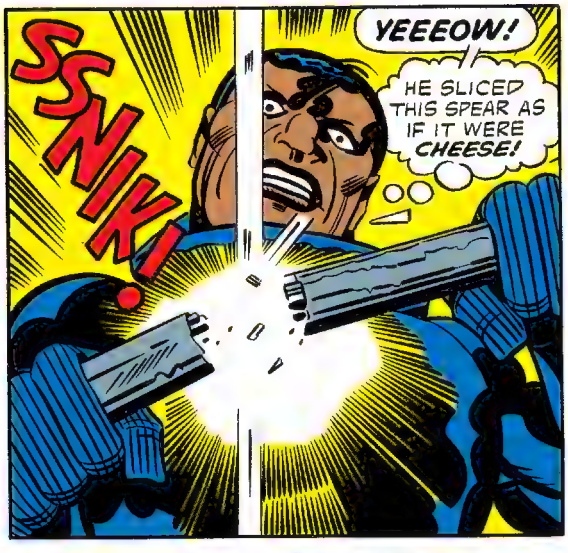
RESPONDING TO MISTER LITTLE'S SHOUT, THE BLACK PANTHER WHEELS TO FACE...
GREAT DAY! WHERE DID HE COME FROM!?
NEVER MIND THAT! HE'S PREPARING TO SKEWER US WITH THAT UGLY SPEAR!

BEFORE ANOTHER WORD IS SPOKEN, THE SPEAR HURTLES ACROSS THE ROOM WITH UNERRING AIM DIRECTLY AT THE BLACK PANTHER...
DEATH TO STRANGERS! DEATH TO OUTSIDERS!! THE ETERNAL ENEMY OF THE SACRED SAMURAI!


THE PANTHER REACTS WITH INCREDIBLE AGILITY. HE LEAPS FROM THE SPEAR'S PATH AND CATCHES IT IN MID-FLIGHT...
FFTTPP!
W-WELL DONE, P-PANTHER!
THIS IS NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS!

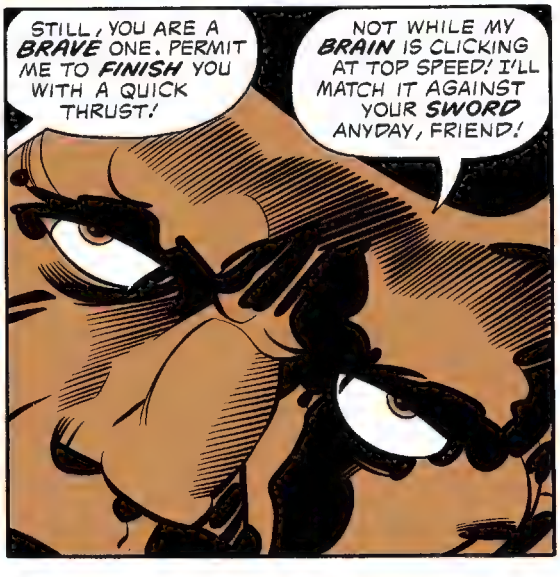
YOUR GOOD FORTUNE WILL END QUITE SOON! THIS SWORD HAS NEVER FAILED TO FIND THE HEART OF A FOE!
THERE'S ALWAYS A FIRST TIME, FRIEND! FRANKLY, I'D RATHER WE TALKED THIS OVER!

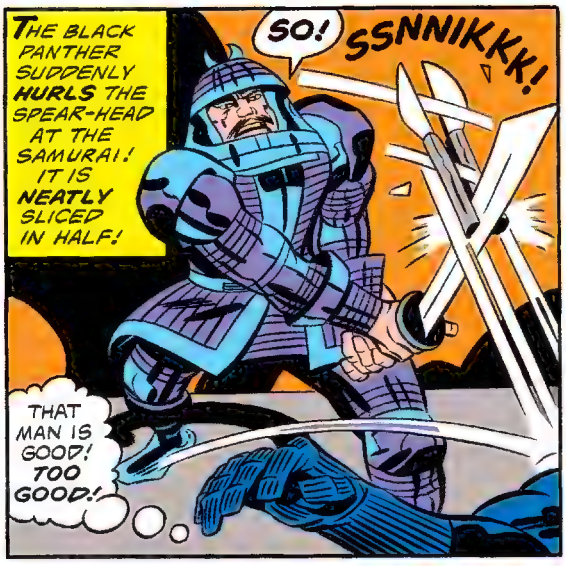

NO... I GUESS NOT! YOU SEEM TO HAVE A ONE-TRACK MIND! WELL... DO YOUR WORST!
THE SACRED SAMURAI ARE THE BEST AND NOBLEST OF WARRIORS! YOU SHALL DIE A QUICK AND HONORABLE DEATH!


SSNIK!
YEEEOW!
HE SLICED THIS SPEAR AS IF IT WERE CHEESE!

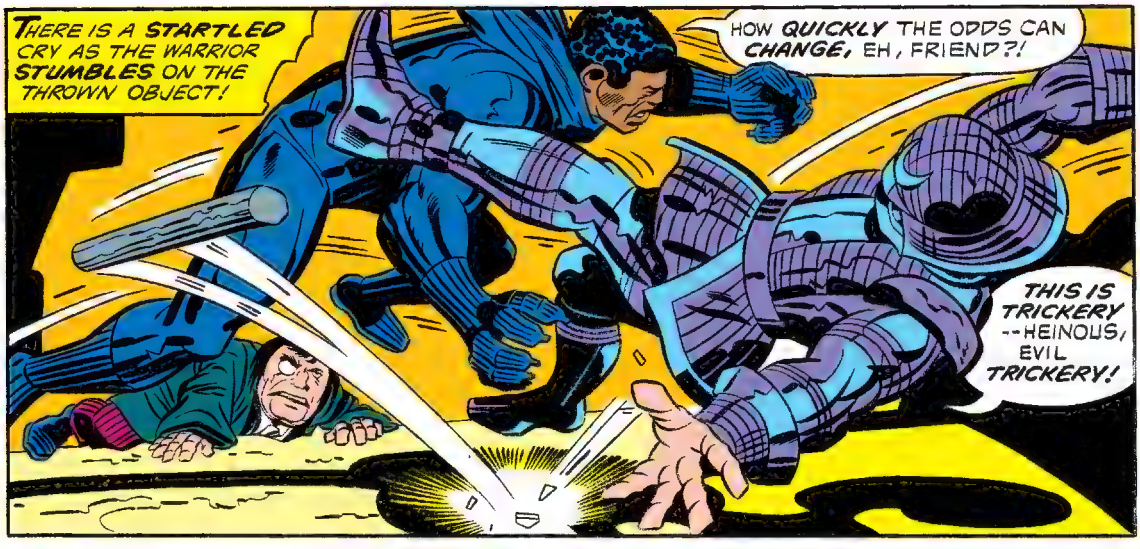
ONLY THE BLACK PANTHER'S SWIFTNESS SAVES HIM FROM THE SAME FATE...
KEEP MOVING --OR HE'LL TAKE OFF YOUR HEAD!
SSSNNIKK!
THAT'S SOUND ADVICE, MISTER LITTLE!

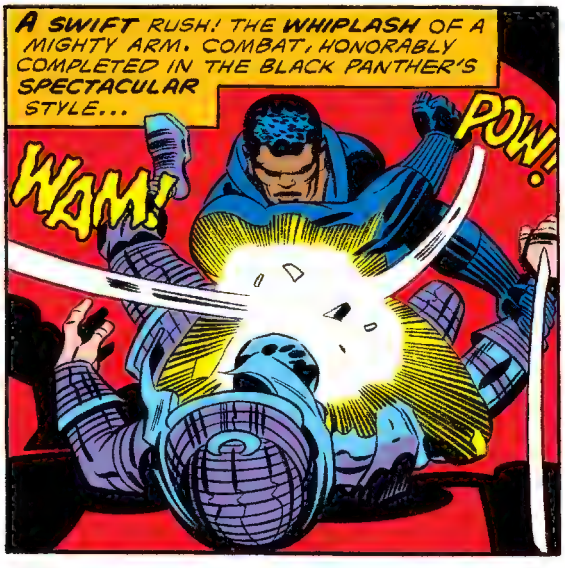
BUT THAT BLADE IS IN EXPERT HANDS! IT'LL GET ME SOONER OR LATER! UNLESS I USE MY ONE REMAINING WEAPON!
YOU HAVE NO WEAPON, OUTSIDER!

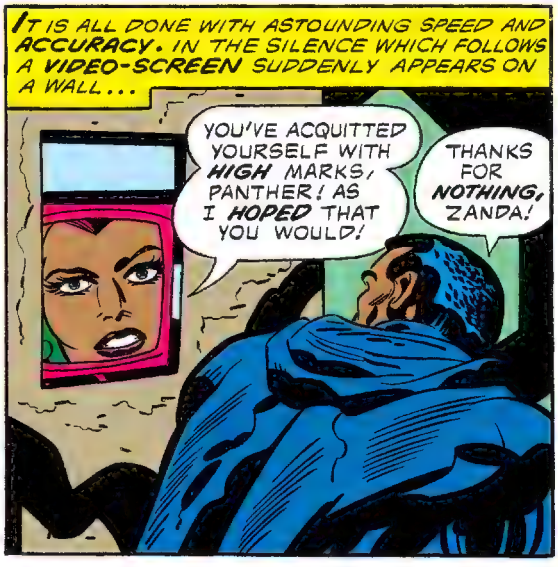

STILL, YOU ARE A BRAVE ONE. PERMIT ME TO FINISH YOU WITH A QUICK THRUST!
NOT WHILE MY BRAIN IS CLICKING AT TOP SPEED! I'LL MATCH IT AGAINST YOUR SWORD ANYDAY, FRIEND!

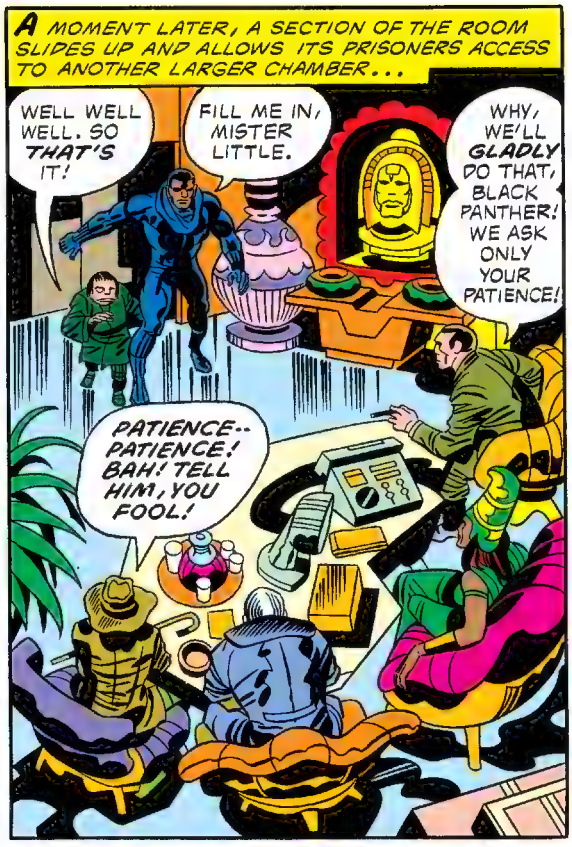

THE BLACK PANTHER SUDDENLY HURLS THE SPEAR-HEAD AT THE SAMURAI! IT IS NEATLY SLICED IN HALF!
SO!
SSNNIKKK!
THAT MAN IS GOOD! TOO GOOD!

THEN...
I'VE STILL GOT THE OTHER PART OF THE BROKEN SPEAR! TRY WALKING ON IT!


THERE IS A STARTLED CRY AS THE WARRIOR STUMBLES ON THE THROWN OBJECT!
HOW QUICKLY THE ODDS CAN CHANGE, EH, FRIEND?!
THIS IS TRICKERY --HEINOUS, EVIL TRICKERY!


A SWIFT RUSH! THE WHIPLASH OF A MIGHTY ARM. COMBAT, HONORABLY COMPLETED IN THE BLACK PANTHER'S SPECTACULAR STYLE...
WAM!
POW!

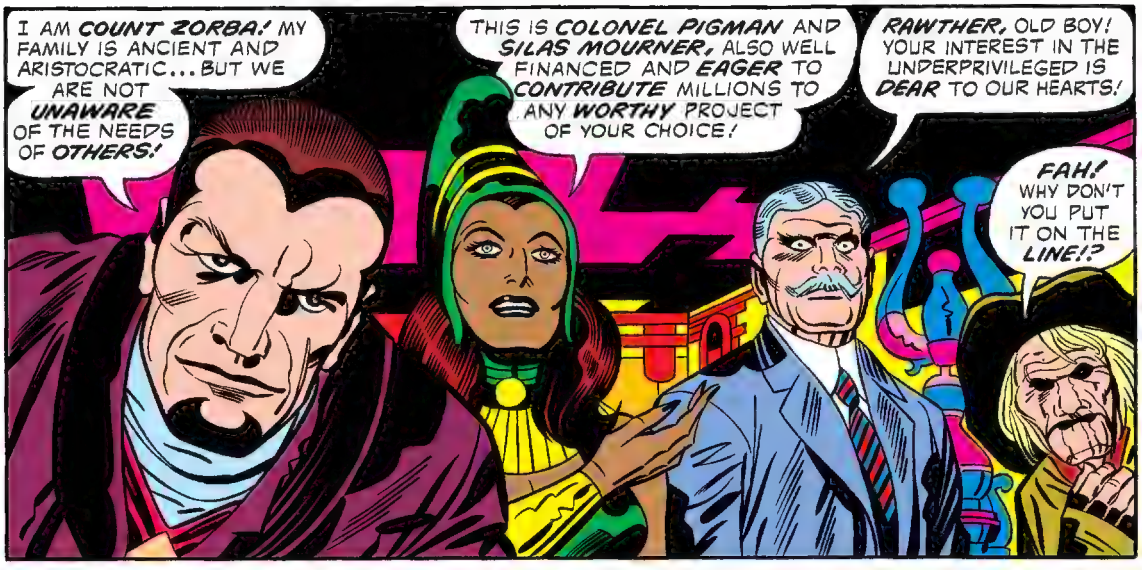

IT IS ALL DONE WITH ASTOUNDING SPEED AND ACCURACY. IN THE SILENCE WHICH FOLLOWS A VIDEO-SCREEN SUDDENLY APPEARS ON A WALL...
YOU'VE ACQUITTED YOURSELF WITH HIGH MARKS, PANTHER! AS I HOPED THAT YOU WOULD!
THANKS FOR NOTHING, ZANDA!


A MOMENT LATER, A SECTION OF THE ROOM SLIDES UP AND ALLOWS ITS PRISONERS ACCESS TO ANOTHER LARGER CHAMBER...
WELL WELL WELL. SO THAT'S IT!
FILL ME IN, MISTER LITTLE.
WHY, WE'LL GLADLY DO THAT, BLACK PANTHER! WE ASK ONLY YOUR PATIENCE!
PATIENCE-- PATIENCE! BAH! TELL HIM, YOU FOOL!

I'M NOT IN THE MOOD TO LISTEN TO ANYTHING... EXCEPT THE WORD GOODBYE!
I'VE HAD ALL I CAN TAKE OF THIS PLACE!
NOT YET, PANTHER! WE DIDN'T TEST YOU WITHOUT REASON! YOU WILL STAY AND LISTEN TO US!
THAT WAS A REAL SAMURAI YOU FOUGHT! HIS KIND STILL EXISTS!

HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, HIS CLAN WAS DRIVEN INTO EXILE TO AN AREA SO REMOTE IT WAS NOT DISCOVERED UNTIL THIS DAY! THE CAPTURE OF THE SAMURAI BY ONE OF MY RAIDING PARTIES REVEALED WHAT THE COLLECTORS HAVE ALWAYS SUSPECTED!
THE COLLECTORS, EH? STOP RIGHT THERE! I'LL HAVE NO PART IN YOUR SCHEMES!
SILENCE!

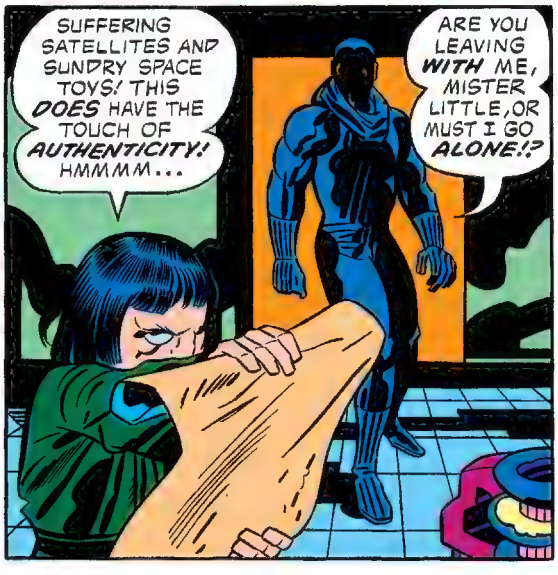
NONSENSE! YOU'VE PROVED THAT YOU'RE THE ONE MAN WHO CAN ENTER THIS SECRET DOMAIN AND RETURN WITH THAT WHICH WE SEEK!
YOU'RE SIMPLY BEATING EMPTY AIR! MY EARS ARE CLOSED TO ANY OF YOUR PROPOSITIONS!
ARE THEY CLOSED TO RICH REWARDS?


I AM COUNT ZORBA! MY FAMILY IS ANCIENT AND ARISTOCRATIC... BUT WE ARE NOT UNAWARE OF THE NEEDS OF OTHERS!
THIS IS COLONEL PIGMAN AND SILAS MOURNER, ALSO WELL FINANCED AND EAGER TO CONTRIBUTE MILLIONS TO ANY WORTHY PROJECT OF YOUR CHOICE!
RAWTHER, OLD BOY! YOUR INTEREST IN THE UNDERPRIVILEGED IS DEAR TO OUR HEARTS!
FAH! WHY DON'T YOU PUT IT ON THE LINE!?

DON'T LISTEN TO THE VULTURES! I KNOW WHAT THEY'RE AFTER! IT'S MORE TROUBLE THAN IT'S WORTH!
ALL TOO TRUE, MISTER LITTLE!
THUS... I BID YOU COLLECTORS A FOND FARE-WELL!
BESIDES... YOUR TRIBE IS RICH ENOUGH TO FINANCE ITS OWN PROJECTS!

STOP!
YOU DON'T REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING! HEAR US OUT, MISTER LITTLE!
WHY!? THIS POPPYCOCK OF FINDING THE LAIR OF THE SACRED SAMURAI IS AS OLD AS TIME ITSELF!
IT'S LIKE PURSUING A FAIRY TALE!

WOULD AN ACTUAL MAP OF THIS FAIRY TALE SATISFY YOU?!! TAKE IT, MISTER LITTLE. EXAMINE IT WITH EVERY OUNCE OF YOUR EXPERTISE!
W-WHY... THIS ISN'T POSSIBLE! A MAP, YOU SAY!?


SUFFERING SATELLITES AND SUNDRY SPACE TOYS! THIS DOES HAVE THE TOUCH OF AUTHENTICITY! HMMMM...
ARE YOU LEAVING WITH ME, MISTER LITTLE, OR MUST I GO ALONE!?

VERY WELL... I SHALL LEAVE YOU TO YOUR SILLY OLD MAP! GOODBYE, MISTER LITTLE!
WAIT, BLACK PANTHER! THIS MAP IS AUTHENTIC! THE SAMURAI CITY IS NOT A MYTH!
PLEASE LISTEN! THAT CITY IS A FACT! WHICH MEANS THAT SOMEWHERE WITHIN ITS CONFINES IS AN ARTIFACT WORTH THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF MEN!
WELL... DON'T COUNT MINE AS ONE OF THEM! GOODBYE!
FOOL! JACKANAPES! INGRATE! SLOTH! I'M ALLUDING TO AN ARTIFACT WHICH, IF USED PROPERLY, CAN REALIZE MAN'S GREATEST DREAM!!
MY GREATEST DREAM IS TO RID MYSELF OF YOU COLLECTORS FOR ALL TIME!
SPOKEN IN COMPLETE IGNORANCE, PANTHER! YOU'RE BLINDED BY YOUR BIAS AGAINST US!
OUR MOTIVES ARE UNSELFISH! WE WISH TO BENEFIT ALL OF MANKIND!
YES, YES... OF COURSE, OLD CHUM!
HE'S GOT TO DO IT!
STOP THAT DRIED UP OLD MUMMY! HE'S GETTING HYSTERICAL!
BE STILL, SILAS!
NO! I HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO LIVE! I-I NEED THE SACRED WATER-SKIN!
NEXT! A STRANGER IN THE STRANGEST LAND! GET IN ON THE ACTION! READ:
IN QUEST OF THE SACRED WATER!

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BEGINNING: THE MOST SAVAGE QUEST OF ALL!
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©1977 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE PANTHER SEARCHES FOR THE SACRED WATER-SKIN, BUT INSTEAD FINDS DANGER FROM THE ABOMINABLE
YETI!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee Presents: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • LETTERS N' INKS BY **MICHAEL ROYER** • COLORS BY: **IRENE VARTANOFF** • APPRECIATED BY: **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

A DOOR OPENS... A MAN LOOKS BEYOND IT... AND STARES IN DEEP SHOCK AT A MYSTERY THAT WILL TRAP HIM IN THE STRANGEST WEB YET DESIGNED BY DESTINY!
QUEST for the SACRED WATER-SKIN!!..
WHAT DO YOU SEE, MIGHTY RULER OF THE WAKANDAS?
A DEAD MAN--! SHRIVELLED BY AGE--IN A MANNER I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

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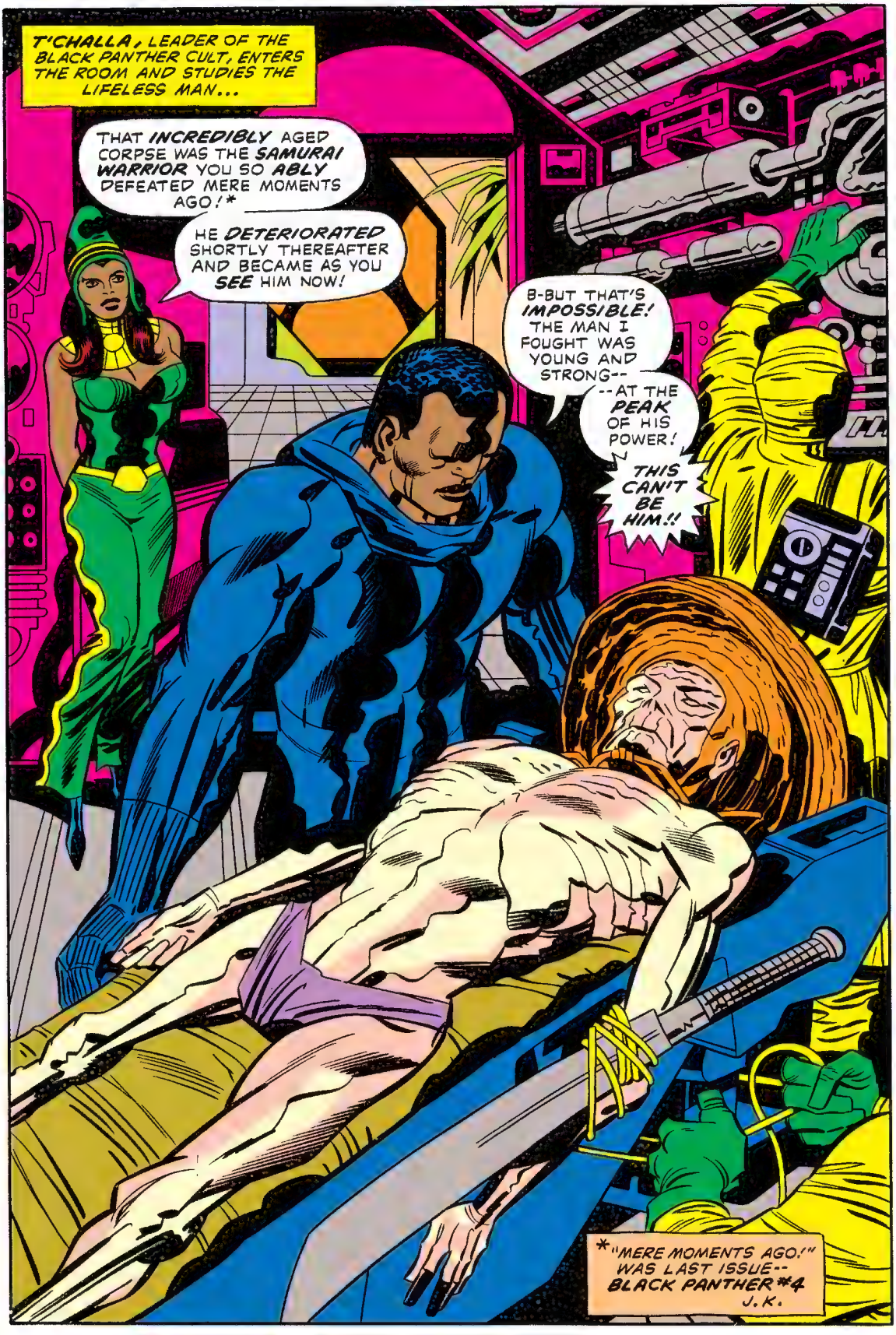
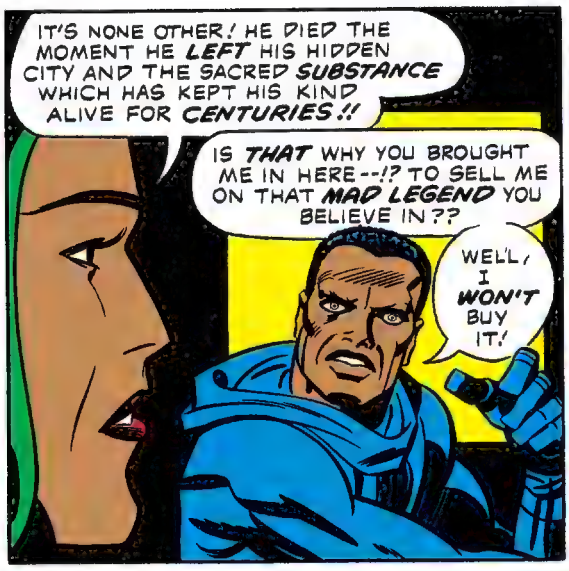
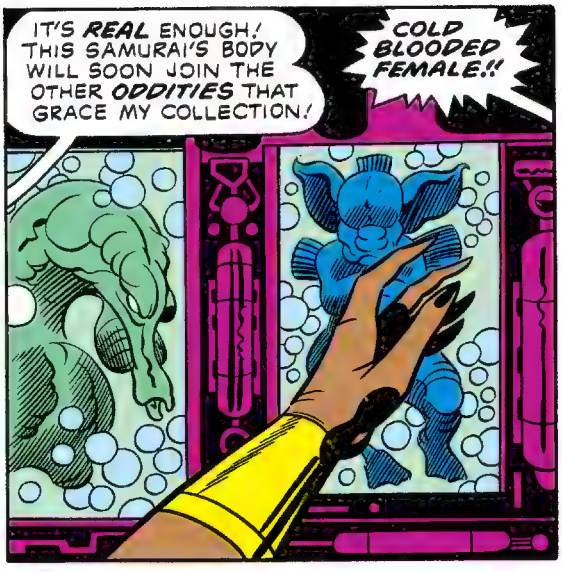
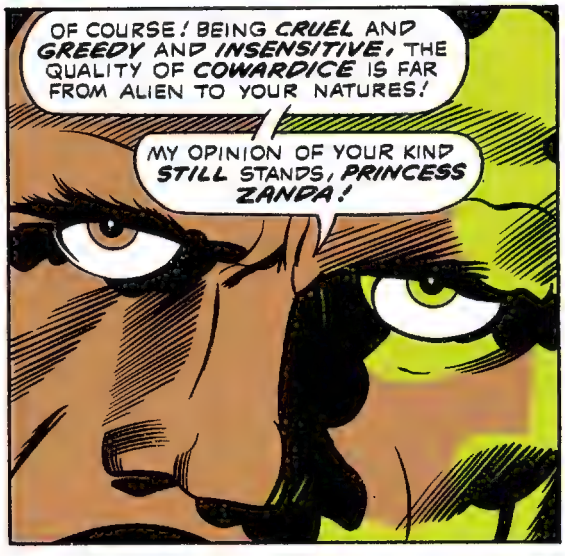

T'CHALLA, LEADER OF THE BLACK PANTHER CULT, ENTERS THE ROOM AND STUDIES THE LIFELESS MAN...
THAT INCREDIBLY AGED CORPSE WAS THE SAMURAI WARRIOR YOU SO ABLY DEFEATED MERE MOMENTS AGO!*
HE DETERIORATED SHORTLY THEREAFTER AND BECAME AS YOU SEE HIM NOW!
B-BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THE MAN I FOUGHT WAS YOUNG AND STRONG--
--AT THE PEAK OF HIS POWER!
THIS CAN'T BE HIM!!
*"MERE MOMENTS AGO!" WAS LAST ISSUE-- BLACK PANTHER #4 J.K.


IT'S NONE OTHER! HE DIED THE MOMENT HE LEFT HIS HIDDEN CITY AND THE SACRED SUBSTANCE WHICH HAS KEPT HIS KIND ALIVE FOR CENTURIES!!
IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT ME IN HERE--!? TO SELL ME ON THAT MAD LEGEND YOU BELIEVE IN??
WELL, I WON'T BUY IT!


IT'S REAL ENOUGH! THIS SAMURAI'S BODY WILL SOON JOIN THE OTHER ODDITIES THAT GRACE MY COLLECTION!
COLD BLOODED FEMALE!!

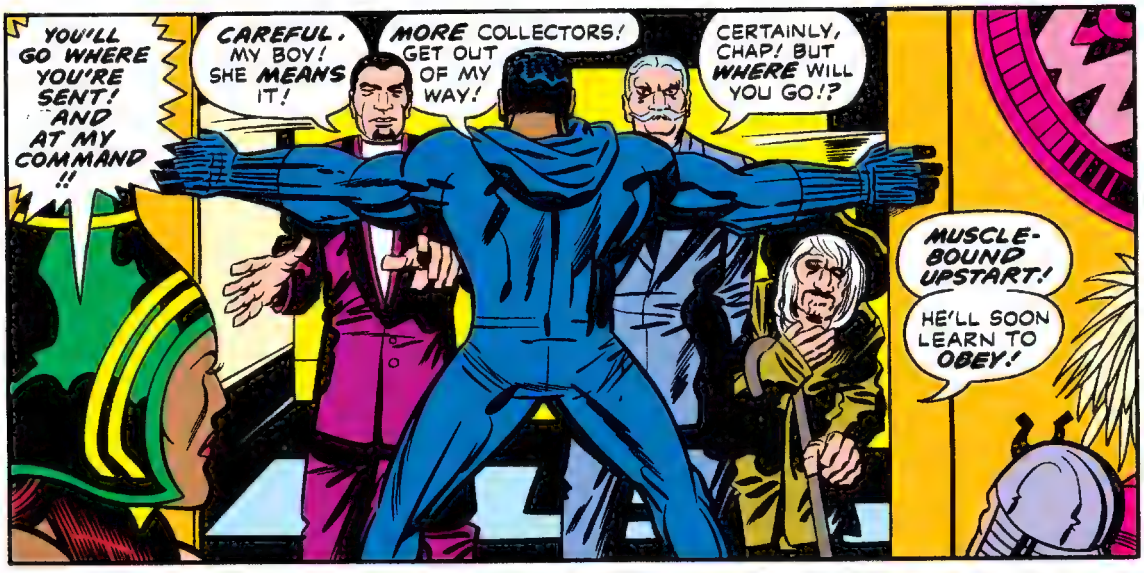
IT'S YOUR WEIRD BAND OF COLLECTORS WHO SHOULD BE KEPT AS CURIOUSITIES IN THESE TANKS! YOU'RE NO LONGER HUMAN!
OH, WE'RE HUMAN, ALL RIGHT! NONE OF US LOOK FORWARD TO EVENTUAL DEATH!

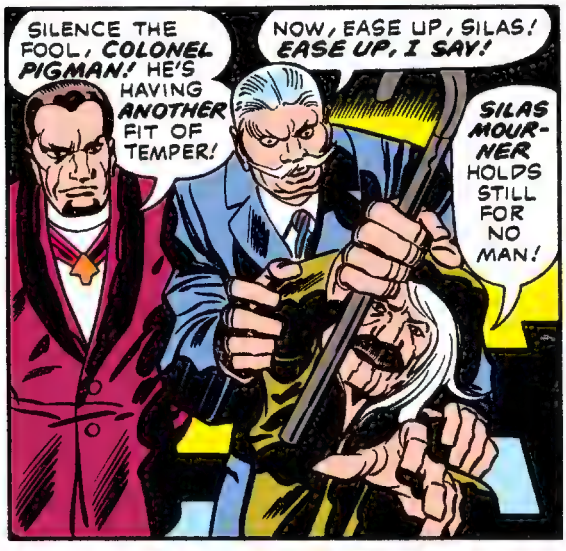

OF COURSE! BEING CRUEL AND GREEDY AND INSENSITIVE, THE QUALITY OF COWARDICE IS FAR FROM ALIEN TO YOUR NATURES!
MY OPINION OF YOUR KIND STILL STANDS, PRINCESS ZANDA!

AND IF YOU INTEND TO INCLUDE ME IN YOUR PLANS, I'D ADVISE YOU TO FORGET IT!
AS A LEADER OF YOUR PEOPLE, YOU SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT THE USES OF POWER, T'CHALLA!

MY PEOPLE SURVIVE AND PROSPER BECAUSE THEY'VE NEVER BEEN ABUSED!
I WIELD POWER! BUT IT IS POWER FOR PEACE!
FEAR BRINGS PEACE! FEAR GAINS RESULTS! FEAR WILL DRIVE YOU INTO MY CAMP, PROUD ONE!

DON'T FIGHT ME, BLACK PANTHER. I-I AM THE DAUGHTER OF AN EMIR! I-I WISH TO BE GENTLE--BUT I-I DON'T KNOW HOW--!
TO BE GENTLE MEANS TO BLEND YOUR EMOTIONS WITH THOSE OF OTHERS!
I CAN DO THAT --WITH ONE SUCH AS YOU!
CAN YOU?? CAN YOU REALLY GIVE, INSTEAD OF TAKE!?
SUDDENLY...
MISTER LITTLE! I DIDN'T SEND FOR YOU--!
IT SEEMS THAT HE'S FOUND A ROLE IN SOME ORIENTAL COMIC OPERA!
STARS AND COMETS, SIR!!
DON'T YOU KNOW A SAMURAI WARRIOR WHEN YOU SEE ONE!?
I KNOW A THIEF WHEN I SEE ONE! RETURN THAT ARMOR AT ONCE!
IT BELONGS TO A RARE STATUE WHICH I VALUE QUITE HIGHLY!
NOW... RESTORE ITS COSTUME !!
SEE HERE, ZANDA!
IF I AM TO ACCOMPANY THE BLACK PANTHER TO THE HIDDEN SAMURAI CITY, I'LL NOT TRAVEL WITHOUT AUTHENTIC GARB!
IF YOU TRAVEL, IT WILL BE ALONE! I AM OVERDUE IN MY OWN NATIVE LAND!


YOU'LL GO WHERE YOU'RE SENT! AND AT MY COMMAND !!
CAREFUL, MY BOY! SHE MEANS IT!
MORE COLLECTORS! GET OUT OF MY WAY!
CERTAINLY, CHAP! BUT WHERE WILL YOU GO!?
MUSCLE-BOUND UPSTART!
HE'LL SOON LEARN TO OBEY!


SILENCE THE FOOL, COLONEL PIGMAN! HE'S HAVING ANOTHER FIT OF TEMPER!
NOW, EASE UP, SILAS! EASE UP, I SAY!
SILAS MOURNER HOLDS STILL FOR NO MAN!

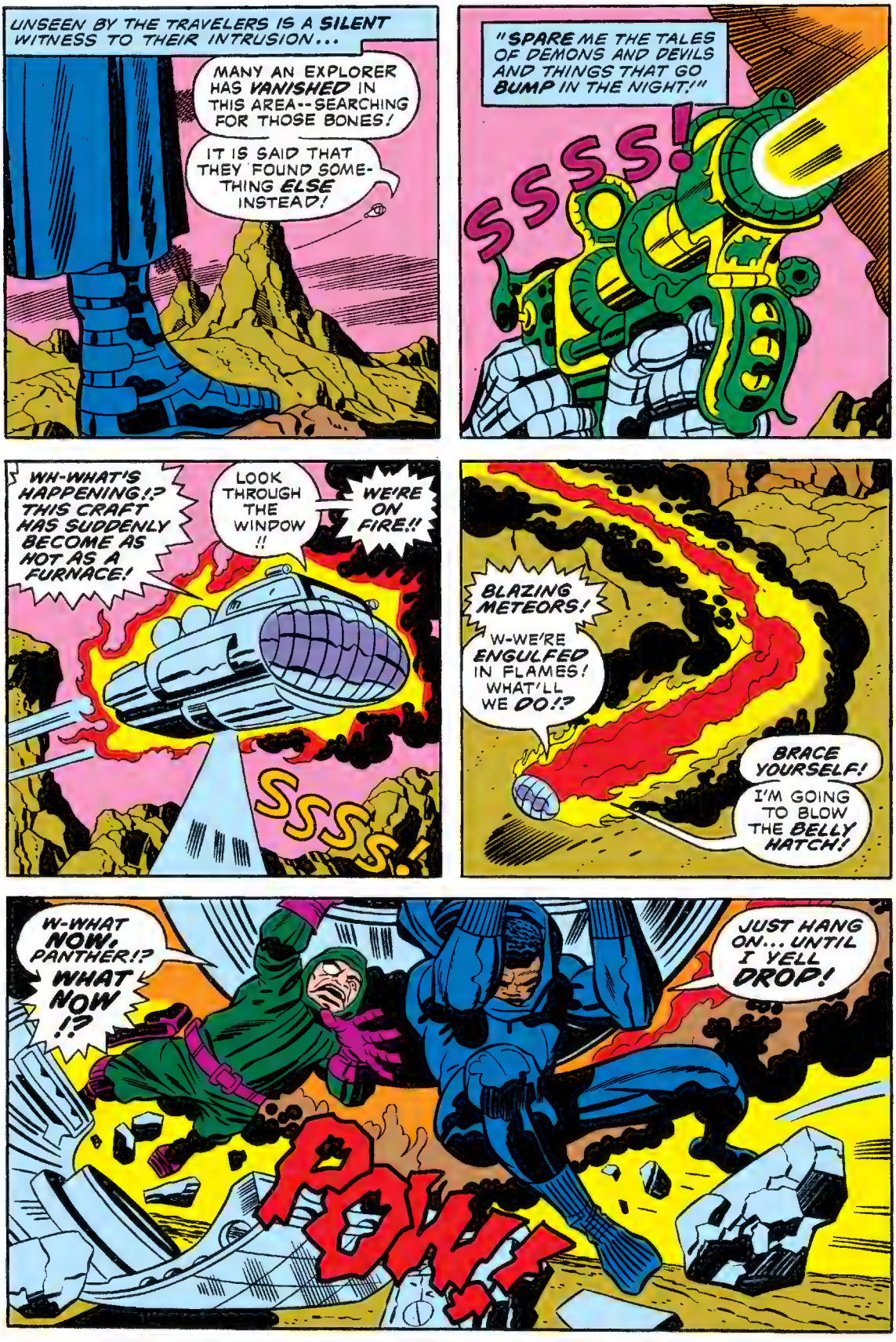
I'M RICH! I'M POWERFUL! BUT, I-I'M VERY OLD...
OLD... DO YOU HEAR!!? MY TIME GROWS SHORTER EACH DAY! THAT'S WHY I INVESTED HEAVILY IN THIS VENTURE!
IT MEANS LIFE OR DEATH FOR ME !!

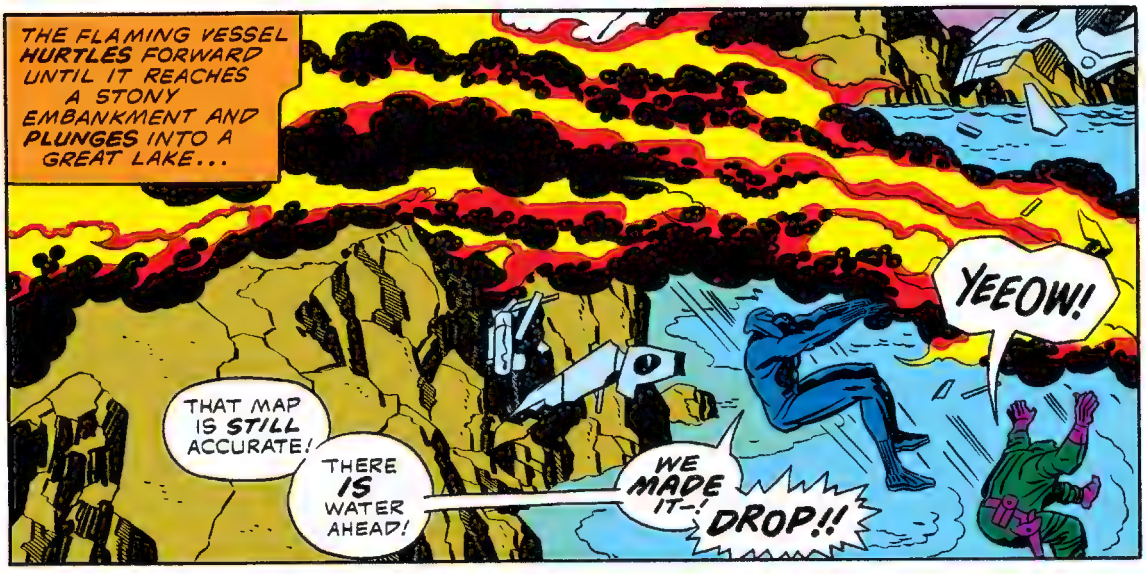
IF WE BRING BACK THE SACRED SAMURAI WATER-SKIN, WE CAN ALL STAY YOUNG, PANTHER!
ETERNAL YOUTH, EH? AND YOU THINK THAT I CAN GET IT FOR YOU!
YOU SHALL GET IT FOR US!!

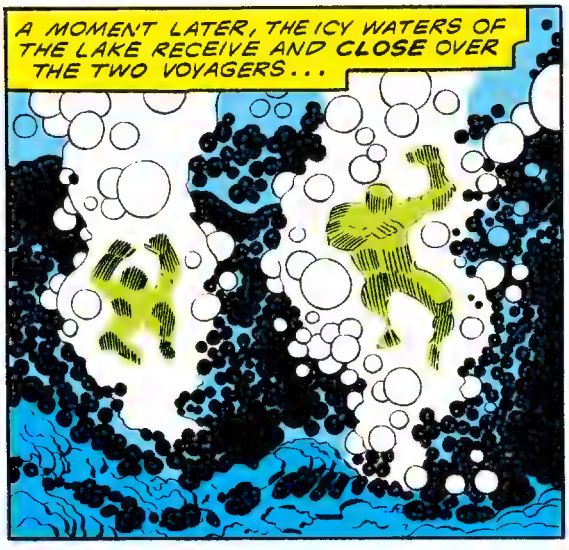
IF YOU DON'T FEAR FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY, THE FATE OF THE WAKANDAS MAY GIVE YOU PAUSE TO REFLECT!
HAVE A CARE, ZANDA! YOU TREAD ON DANGEROUS GROUND!
WHAT ARE YOU POINTING AT!?

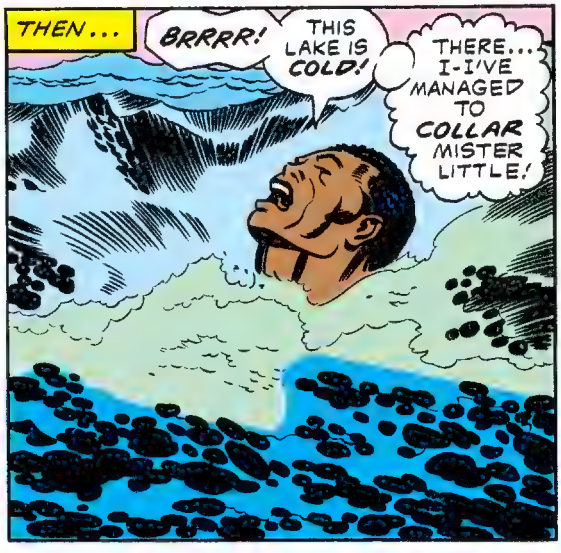
TO T'CHALLA'S ASTONISHMENT, A GREAT MISSILE RISES FROM ITS SILO...
I SPEAK OF A FIRST STRIKE, PANTHER! I SPEAK OF A NUCLEAR ATTACK WHICH WILL WIPE YOUR PEACE LOVERS OFF THE WORLD MAP!
Y-YOU WOULD DARE RESORT TO THIS!?
TAKE IT FROM ABNER LITTLE, YOUNG FELLOW-- ZANDA WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO GET WHAT SHE WANTS!
THIS IS THE TRUE MEANING OF POWER! AS RULER OF AN OIL-RICH EMIRATE, I HAVE THE MEANS TO ENFORCE MY EVERY WISH!
DO MY BIDDING--
--OR THE WAKANDAS CEASE TO EXIST!!
MY PEOPLE ...HELD HOSTAGE-- BY A GROUP OF MAD COLLECTORS! A STRANGE DESTINY INDEED!
AND YOU, MISTER LITTLE?! MOST NOBLE FRIEND AND COMPANION... YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS!!?
DO IT, PANTHER! NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE-- DO IT BECAUSE MEN SAY IT CAN'T BE DONE!
YOU AND I SHALL SEEK AND FIND THE WATER OF IM-MORTALITY!!

WEEKS LATER... ABOVE A BARREN WIND-SWEPT LAND, RARELY SEEN BY OUTSIDERS...
THE ANCIENT MAP IS UNCANNILY ACCURATE!
WE'RE RIGHT ON TARGET AND MAKING GOOD TIME!
I'M TRULY OVERWHELMED! THE EFFICIENCY OF ZANDA'S HARDWARE IS BEYOND COMPARISON !!
DON'T LET YOUR BITTERNESS CLOUD THE SITUATION, PANTHER! ONLY ZANDA'S RICHES COULD HAVE GIVEN US THE ADVANTAGE OF THIS FINE HOVER-CRAFT!
I CAN DO WITHOUT ZANDA-- AND THIS AIR-DRIVEN SARDINE CAN!
THE ROYAL FURY COULD BE A MOST DESIRABLE WOMAN--IF SHE WASN'T A COLLECTOR! IT WAS CRUEL OF HER TO WITHHOLD MY SAMURAI OUTFIT!
IF THAT'S ALL THAT DISTURBS YOU, THEN LOOK TO YOUR OWN HYPOCRISY AS A FRIEND!
AT THIS MOMENT, MY PEOPLE ARE ZANDA'S PRISONERS!! AND IF WE DON'T RETURN WITH--
OH, POPPYCOCK AND BOULDER-DASH!
IF WE DON'T RETURN--SHE'LL HAVE NO NEED TO USE THE BOMB--!
BUT AS LONG AS WE'RE COMMITTED, LET US MAKE THE MOST OF THIS BOLD VENTURE!
HUH! A FLIGHT TO NOWHERE-- A LAND OF OLD STONES AND BONES!

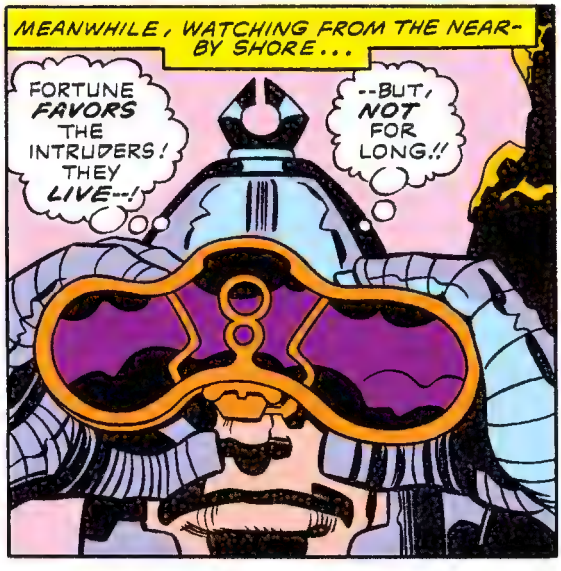

UNSEEN BY THE TRAVELERS IS A SILENT WITNESS TO THEIR INTRUSION...
MANY AN EXPLORER HAS VANISHED IN THIS AREA--SEARCHING FOR THOSE BONES!
IT IS SAID THAT THEY FOUND SOMETHING ELSE INSTEAD!
"SPARE ME THE TALES OF DEMONS AND DEVILS AND THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT!"
SSSS!
WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING!? THIS CRAFT HAS SUDDENLY BECOME AS HOT AS A FURNACE!
LOOK THROUGH THE WINDOW !!
WE'RE ON FIRE!!
SSSS!
BLAZING METEORS!
W-WE'RE ENGULFED IN FLAMES! WHAT'LL WE DO!?
BRACE YOURSELF!
I'M GOING TO BLOW THE BELLY HATCH!
W-WHAT NOW, PANTHER!? WHAT NOW !?
JUST HANG ON... UNTIL I YELL DROP!
POW!


THE FLAMING VESSEL HURTLES FORWARD UNTIL IT REACHES A STONY EMBANKMENT AND PLUNGES INTO A GREAT LAKE...
YEEOW!
THAT MAP IS STILL ACCURATE!
THERE IS WATER AHEAD!
WE MADE IT--!
DROP!!


A MOMENT LATER, THE ICY WATERS OF THE LAKE RECEIVE AND CLOSE OVER THE TWO VOYAGERS...

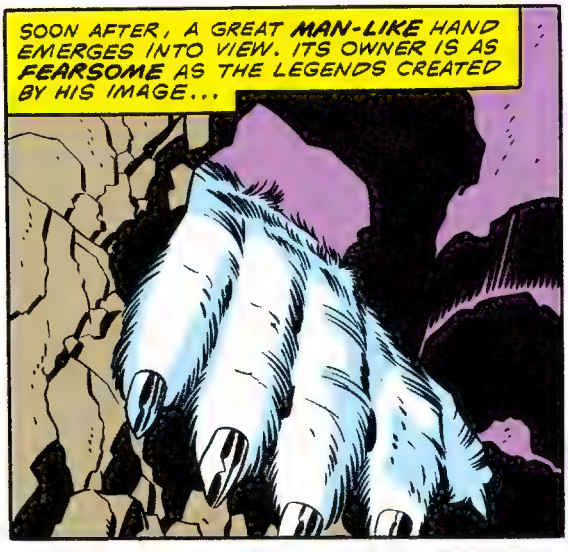

THEN...
BRRRR!
THIS LAKE IS COLD!
THERE... I-I'VE MANAGED TO COLLAR MISTER LITTLE!

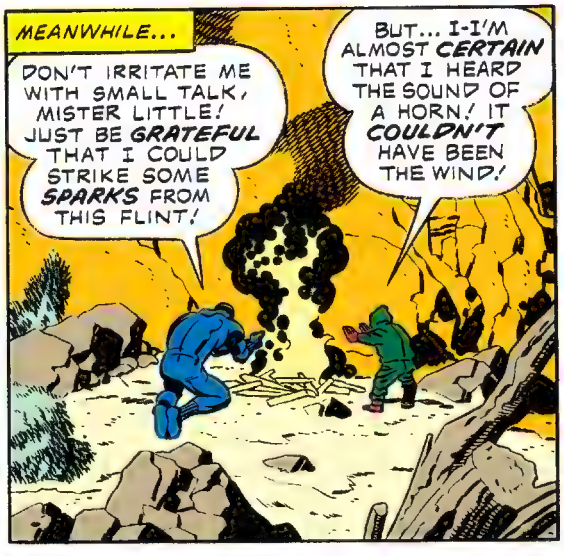
CAREFUL, YOU JACKANAPES! I ALMOST LOST MY MONOCLE!
IT WOULD BE HUMANITY'S GAIN IF THE FISH GOT YOU BOTH!


MEANWHILE, WATCHING FROM THE NEAR-BY SHORE...
FORTUNE FAVORS THE INTRUDERS! THEY LIVE--!
--BUT, NOT FOR LONG!!

IT IS TIME TO SUMMON THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATEWAY! HIS WORK IS MORE FINAL IN THESE MATTERS!
TARRAAA!

THERE IS BUT ONE SHORT BLAST OF THE HORN AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE LARGE CAVE. SOMETHING HUGE AND HEAVY STIRS WITHIN ITS DARK INTERIOR...


SOON AFTER, A GREAT MAN-LIKE HAND EMERGES INTO VIEW. ITS OWNER IS AS FEARSOME AS THE LEGENDS CREATED BY HIS IMAGE...


MEANWHILE...
DON'T IRRITATE ME WITH SMALL TALK, MISTER LITTLE! JUST BE GRATEFUL THAT I COULD STRIKE SOME SPARKS FROM THIS FLINT!
BUT... I-I'M ALMOST CERTAIN THAT I HEARD THE SOUND OF A HORN! IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE WIND!

SEE HERE, COLLECTOR! I'M COLD AND WET AND MISERABLE--AND SCARCELY IN THE MOOD FOR FURTHER CONVERSATION!
ULP!! Y-YOU DON'T-- UNDERSTAND--!

I UNDERSTAND THAT OUR CHANCES OF GETTING BACK HAVE FALLEN TO ZERO--! THAT MY PEOPLE MAY BE DOOMED BY ZANDA'S ANGER!
EVEN AS YOU MAY BE DOOMED BY MINE!
NO! NO--!

BE STILL, I SAY--! IT WOULD TAKE BUT ONE MORE WORD FROM YOUR TREACHEROUS MOUTH TO SNAP WHAT BIT OF CONTROL IS LEFT TO ME!
I'LL RISK IT! THE SOUND OF THAT HORN WAS FAINT--BUT UNMISTAKEABLY CLEAR!
DON'T YOU SEE?!
WE'RE NOT ALONE!
THERE ARE OTHERS HERE !!
BY THE GREAT PANTHER TOTEM!!
HELP MAY BE ON ITS WAY THIS VERY—
THAT THING-- UP THERE!!!
W-WHAT IS IT!? W-WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT--!!?
RRRR
G-GALLOPING GALAXIES!! I-IT'S A YETI!!
THE NAME IS STRANGE TO ME--BUT THE MANNER IS ONLY TOO FAMILIAR!
ROARRRR!!

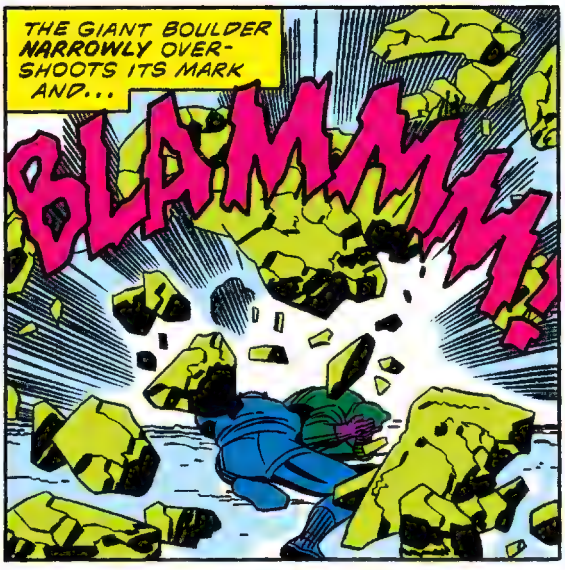
CRASH!
THE YETI, MY DEAR FELLOW, IS THE PROPER TERM FOR THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN!
IT'S COMFORTING TO LEARN THAT!
NOW HIDE BENEATH SOME ROCK WHILE I FIND OUT MORE--THE HARD WAY!

AS THE GIANT YETI REACHES FOR THE BLACK PANTHER, HE SWIFTLY DONS HIS RITUAL MASK. IT IS A TIME FOR COMBAT!
HE'S GOT SIZE AND POWER ON HIS SIDE! I WONDER IF HE'S ALSO BUILT FOR SPEED!

KRAK!
THAT'S FAST ENOUGH !!

T'CHALLA SUDDENLY WHEELS AND LASHES OUT WITH GREAT FORCE...
UURRAAF!!
WOMP!
I'LL HAVE TO SHAKE HIM HARDER THAN THIS--!
THEN--!
KR-RUNTCH!
MY HEAD !!
HE'LL TWIST IT COMPLETELY OFF MY SHOULDERS--
--IF I DON'T USE IT-- NOW!!
IN ONE COBRA-LIKE MOVEMENT, THE BLACK PANTHER BRINGS UP HIS LEGS AND BRACES THEM AGAINST THE YETI'S CHEST...
SSSKMFF!
UUGHH! I-I'M FREE--!
THAT TOOK EVERY OUNCE OF MY STRENGTH! BUT, IT WORKED!

BRUTE FORCE WON'T STOP THAT THING, T'CHALLA! IT'LL TAKE BULLETS TO PENETRATE HIS HAIRY HIDE!
I'VE TESTED HIS POWER-- I THINK YOU'LL WASTE YOUR SHELLS!
BAM! BAM!
HE'S STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS--BUT HE WON'T GO DOWN!
A FEW MORE SHOTS WILL TELL THE TALE! HE MUST HAVE A VITAL SPOT!
NO GOOD!
PUT IT DOWN!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? DESIST, I TELL YOU!
YOU'VE ONLY AROUSED HIM TO FULL FURY! HE'LL CRUSH US LIKE MICE!
HE'LL FINISH US AT ANY RATE--IF WE DON'T FIND A WAY TO GET HIM FIRST!
THONK!
TOO LATE! HERE COMES A BOULDER THAT COULD POUND US INTO PULP!
PREPARE FOR A FAST DROP IN ALTITUDE!
PLOP!
NOW... IF MY TIMING'S RIGHT--
I CAN'T WATCH! I CAN'T THINK! I CAN'T EVEN SCREAM!


THE GIANT BOULDER NARROWLY OVER-SHOOTS ITS MARK AND...
BLAMMM!

HE WON'T MISS THE NEXT TIME! WE'VE JUST GOT ONE CHANCE--A FAR OUT IDEA THAT JUST MAY SAVE OUR NECKS!
I-I'M LISTENING! WHAT'S YOUR PLAN!??
NOW DO AS I TELL YOU!

RRRRR!!
YOU'VE GOT IT, MISTER LITTLE! THE BALL IS YOURS!
I-IT'S MAD, BUT I'LL DO IT!

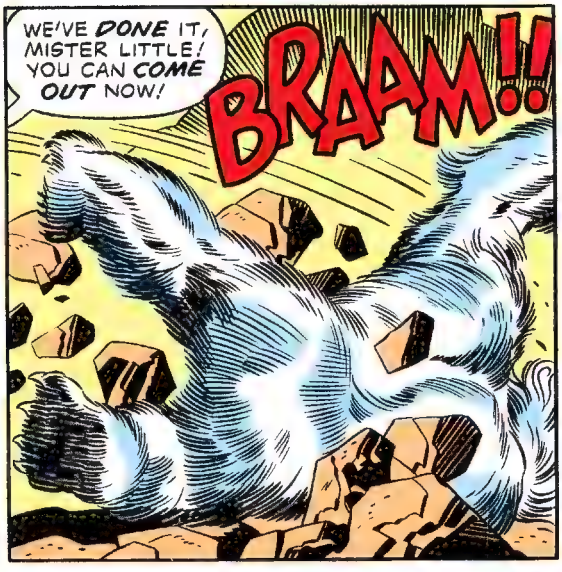
SOON AFTER...
KLOMP!
RAWRR!
TWO CAN PLAY YOUR GAME!

THIS IS IT! HE'LL DOG MY HEELS TILL HE'S CORNERED ME!
IF MY RUSE DOESN'T WORK, HE'LL HAVE US COLD!!

HERE WE COME! ARE YOU SET, MISTER LITTLE!?
I'M SET--
--BUT I'M PRAYING!!

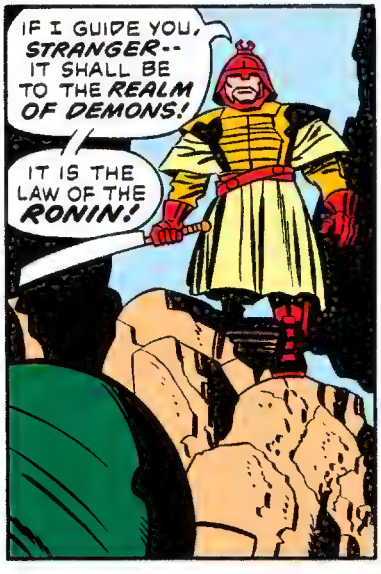
IF THIS YETI HAD A GRADE SCHOOL EDUCATION, HE'D EITHER LAUGH AT US OR RIDICULE OUR SANITY!
BUT THIS IS THE ONLY THING WE'VE GOT GOING FOR US!
IT'S BETTER THAN NOTHING!
GO!!
SANE OR NOT... WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS-- THROW ROCKS!
RRURR!
ZZWSH!
KARAAK!!

THE YETI IS STRUCK WITH TERRIBLE FORCE! A SHUDDER RACES THROUGH ITS MASSIVE FRAME. IT TRIES SHAKILY TO STAY ON ITS FEET, BUT...
UUGHRR--
HE'S HURT!
I-I THINK HE'S GOING DOWN!

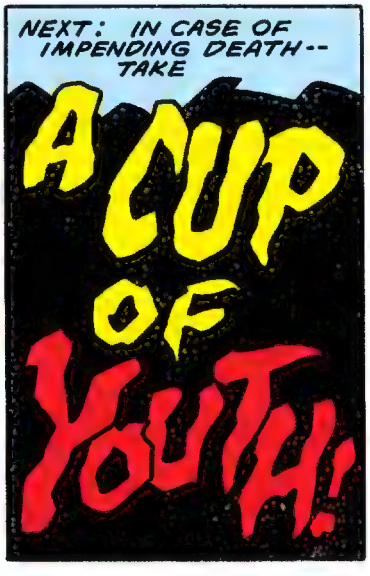

WE'VE DONE IT, MISTER LITTLE! YOU CAN COME OUT NOW!
BRAAM!!

WE'VE MANAGED TO STUN HIM! IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE THE SHOCK WEARS OFF!
WE MUST BE GONE WHEN THAT TIME COMES!

THE GATEWAY TO THE HIDDEN SAMURAI CITY CAN'T BE FAR! OUR LIVES DEPEND ON FINDING IT!
IF ONLY THE MAP HADN'T BEEN LOST IN THAT--
HOLD IT--! WE MAY HAVE A GUIDE!


IF I GUIDE YOU, STRANGER-- IT SHALL BE TO THE REALM OF DEMONS!
IT IS THE LAW OF THE RONIN!

YOUR FATE HAS BEEN DECREED BY THE SWORD!
PREPARE TO DIE!!


NEXT: IN CASE OF IMPENDING DEATH-- TAKE
A CUP OF YOUTH!

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THE PANTHER AT BAY! TRAPPED WITH MR. LITTLE IN THE CITY OF SAMURAI!

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STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • LETTERS N' INKS BY *MICHAEL ROYER* • COLORING BY *SAM KATO* • GLIMPSED BY *ARCHIE GOODWIN*

A CUP OF YOUTH
IT WAS THE DEADLIEST DRINK ON EARTH! AND ONLY THOSE WITH A THIRST TO LIVE FOREVER WERE WILLING TO SEEK OUT THE ANCIENT SAMURAI... DEFY THEIR WEAPONS... AND DARE TO CLAIM--
THIS IS THE TRADITIONAL WELCOME GIVEN TO OUTSIDERS WHO FOOLISHLY TRESPASS IN OUR SECRET LAND!
BUT, WE HAVEN'T COME HERE AS ENEMIES!
DOESN'T THAT COUNT?!?
STARS AND COMETS!
THAT SWING ALMOST SCALPED ME!!

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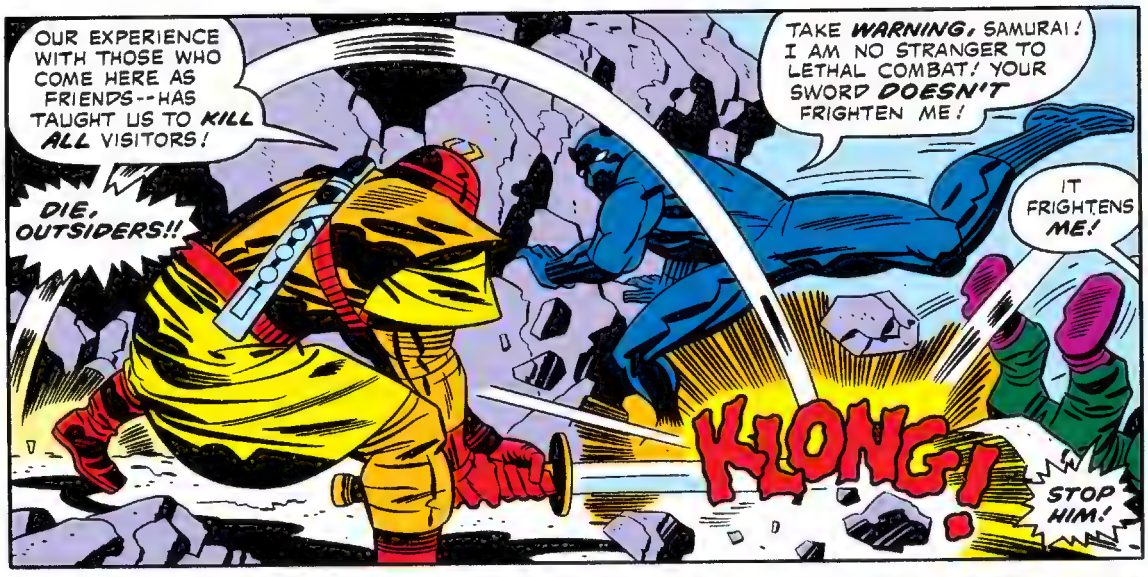
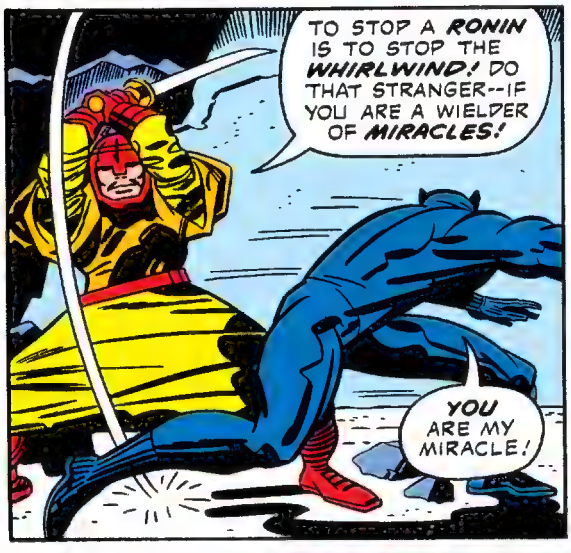
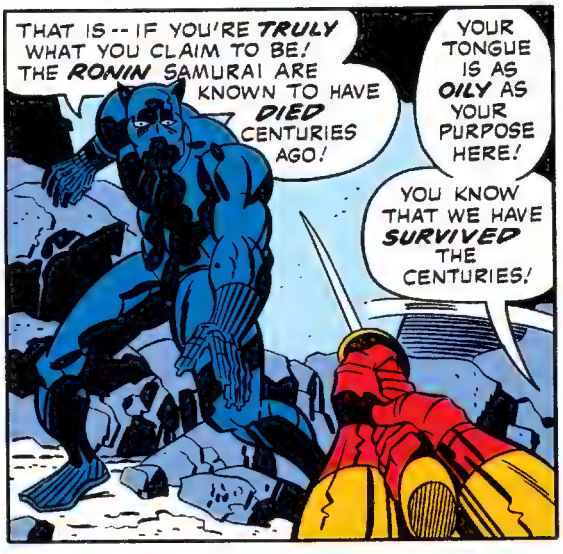
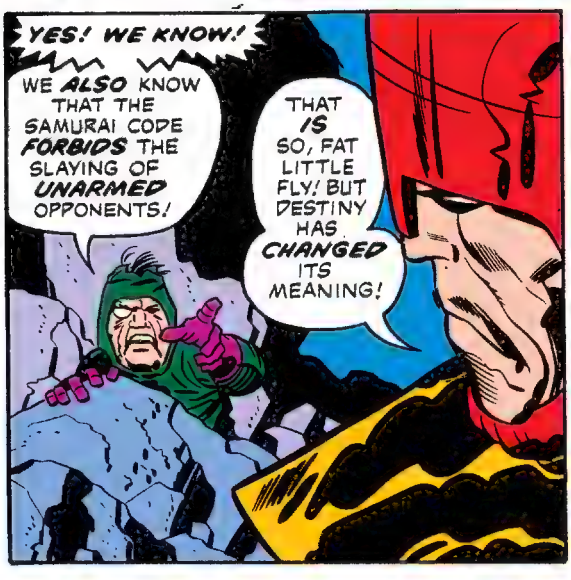
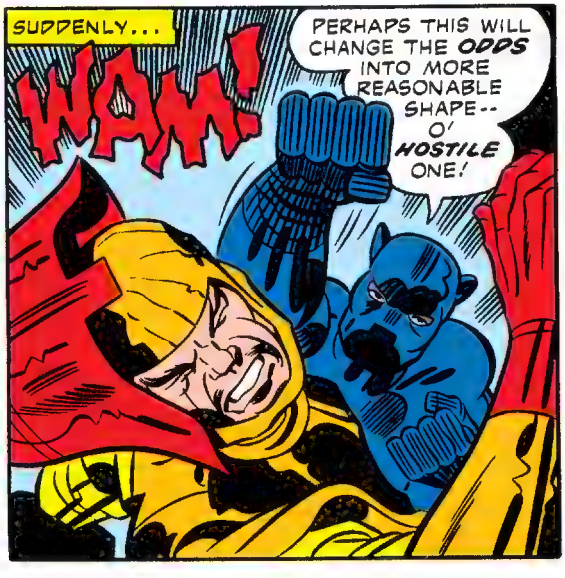
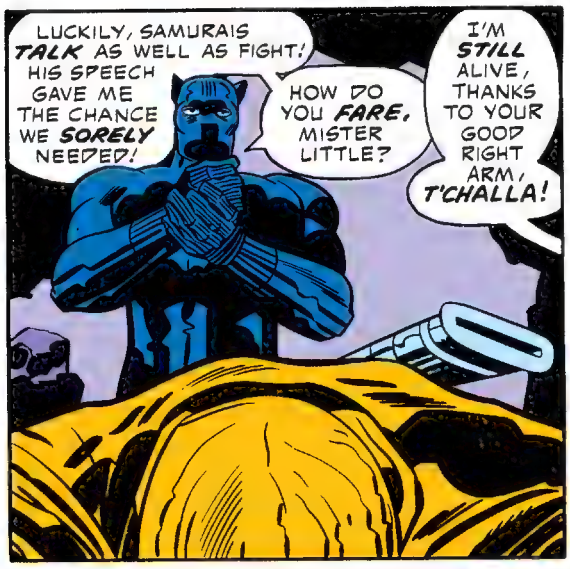

OUR EXPERIENCE WITH THOSE WHO COME HERE AS FRIENDS--HAS TAUGHT US TO KILL ALL VISITORS!
DIE, OUTSIDERS!!
TAKE WARNING, SAMURAI! I AM NO STRANGER TO LETHAL COMBAT! YOUR SWORD DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME!
IT FRIGHTENS ME!
KLONG!
STOP HIM!


TO STOP A RONIN IS TO STOP THE WHIRLWIND! DO THAT STRANGER--IF YOU ARE A WIELDER OF MIRACLES!
YOU ARE MY MIRACLE!


THAT IS--IF YOU'RE TRULY WHAT YOU CLAIM TO BE! THE RONIN SAMURAI ARE KNOWN TO HAVE DIED CENTURIES AGO!
YOUR TONGUE IS AS OILY AS YOUR PURPOSE HERE!
YOU KNOW THAT WE HAVE SURVIVED THE CENTURIES!

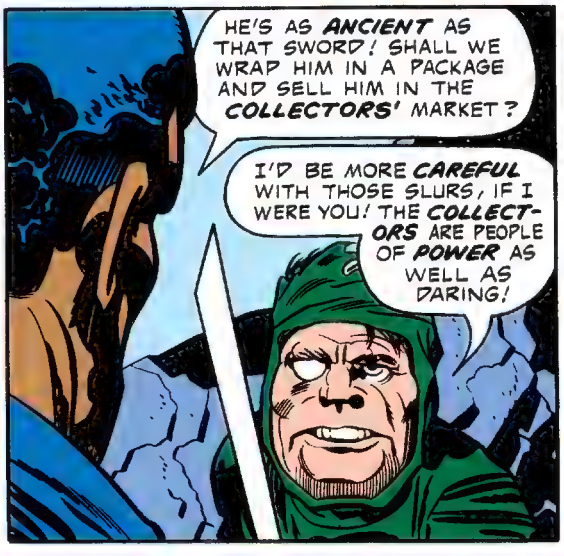

YES! WE KNOW!
WE ALSO KNOW THAT THE SAMURAI CODE FORBIDS THE SLAYING OF UNARMED OPPONENTS!
THAT IS SO, FAT LITTLE FLY! BUT DESTINY HAS CHANGED ITS MEANING!


SUDDENLY...
WAM!
PERHAPS THIS WILL CHANGE THE ODDS INTO MORE REASONABLE SHAPE--O' HOSTILE ONE!

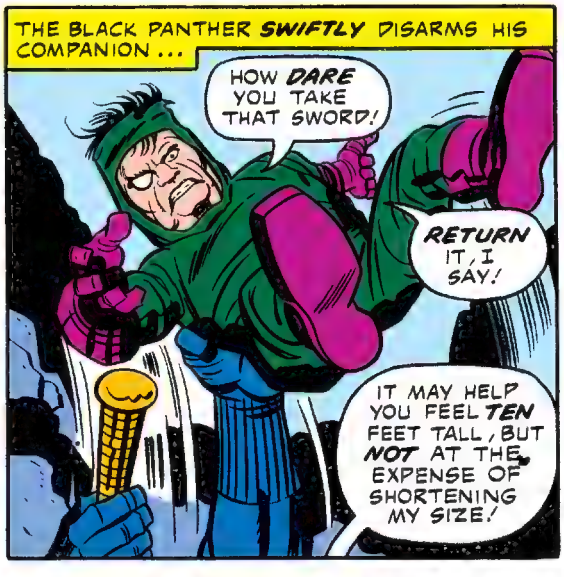

LUCKILY, SAMURAIS TALK AS WELL AS FIGHT! HIS SPEECH GAVE ME THE CHANCE WE SORELY NEEDED!
HOW DO YOU FARE, MISTER LITTLE?
I'M STILL ALIVE, THANKS TO YOUR GOOD RIGHT ARM, T'CHALLA!

I ADMIT THAT YOUR STRATEGY OF DISTRACTING HIM WITH CONVERSATION WAS WELL PLANNED!
WHO WOULD CRITICIZE SUCH FLAWLESS TIMING?
--BUT CLUMSILY CARRIED OUT! I TRUST THAT YOU REALIZE THE VALUE OF MY STERLING ASSISTANCE!

THE TREASURES OF THE SAMURAI ARE NOW OURS TO GATHER! THIS SWORD IS PRICELESS!
WHAT PRICE DO YOU PUT ON THIS MAN?

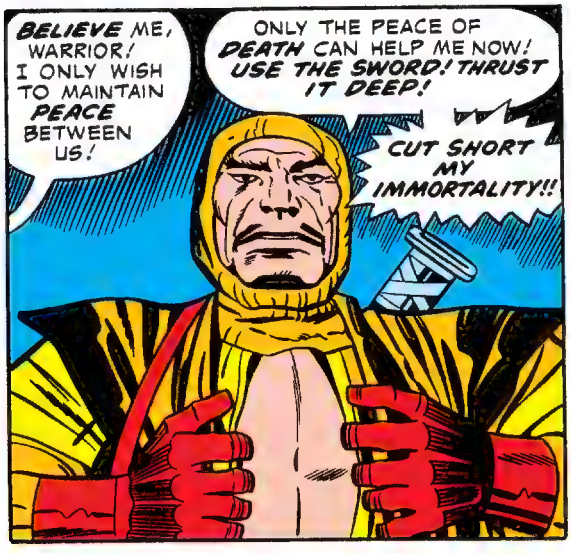

HE'S AS ANCIENT AS THAT SWORD! SHALL WE WRAP HIM IN A PACKAGE AND SELL HIM IN THE COLLECTORS' MARKET?
I'D BE MORE CAREFUL WITH THOSE SLURS, IF I WERE YOU! THE COLLECTORS ARE PEOPLE OF POWER AS WELL AS DARING!

BY THE WHEELING SUNS OF PEGASUS, THIS ASTOUNDING WEAPON COULD MAKE AN INVINCIBLE WARRIOR OF ANY MAN!
FOOL!


THE BLACK PANTHER SWIFTLY DISARMS HIS COMPANION ...
HOW DARE YOU TAKE THAT SWORD!
RETURN IT, I SAY!
IT MAY HELP YOU FEEL TEN FEET TALL, BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF SHORTENING MY SIZE!

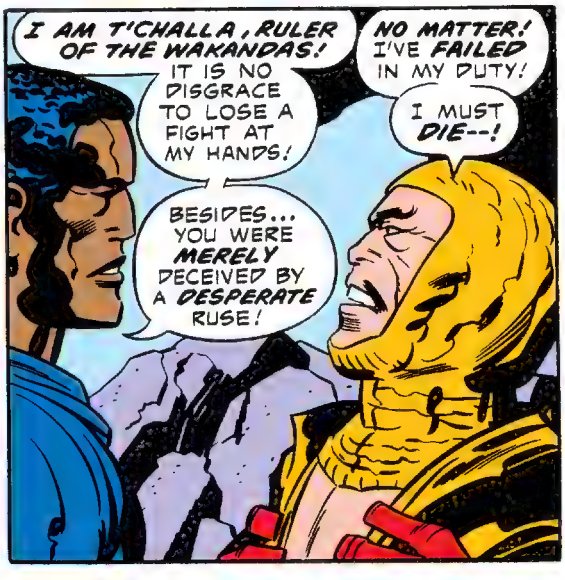
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS RASH ACT!
THIS WEAPON IS GAINING IN POPULARITY, NOW THAT OUR FRIEND'S RECOVERED!
THE SWORD IS MINE!

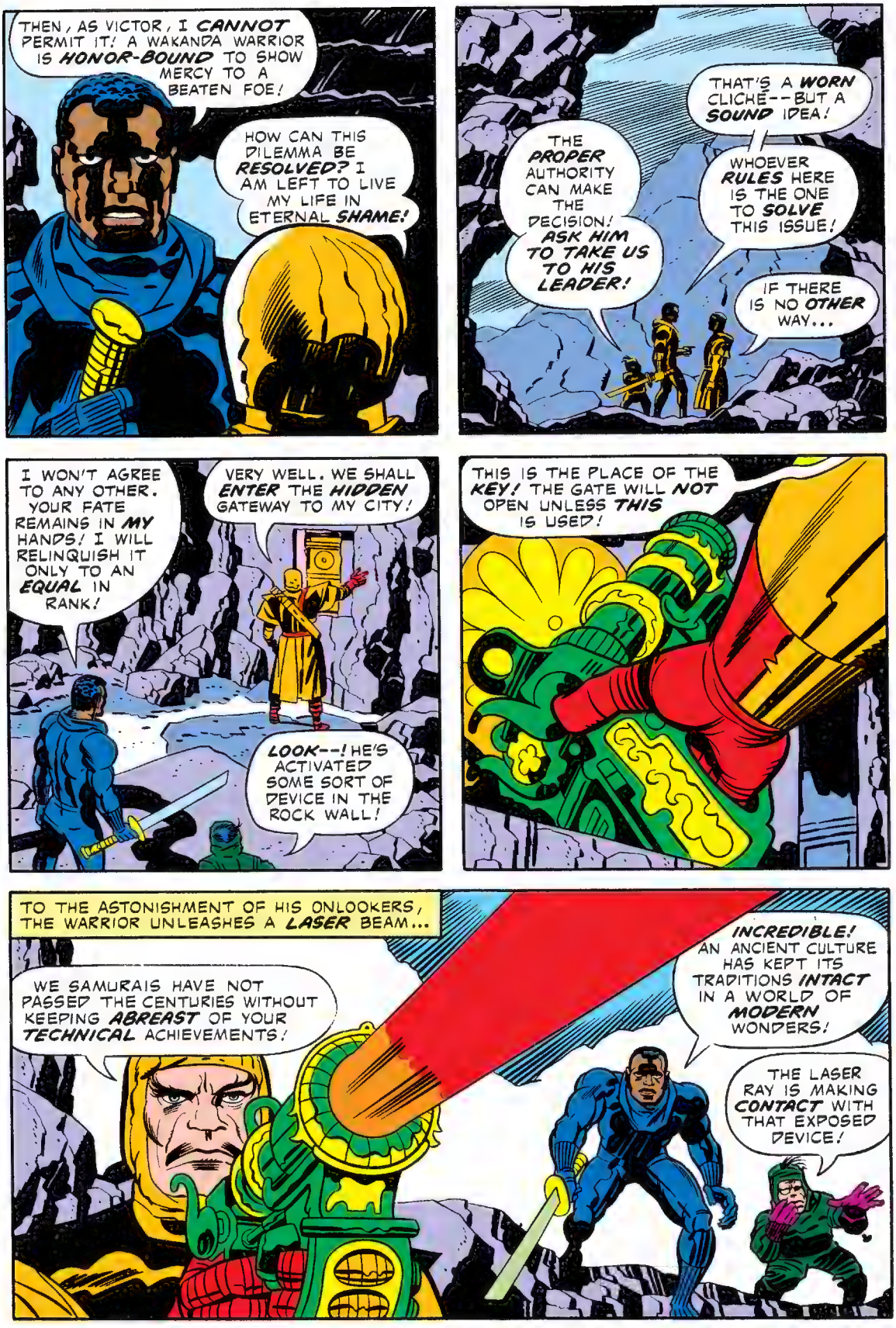
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, STRANGER... TO LOSE ONE'S SWORD SO SHAMEFULLY IS A TOTAL DISGRACE!
SORRY-- BUT IT MUST STAY IN MY KEEPING!
POOR FELLOW. I KNOW WHAT HE MEANS BY SHABBY TREATMENT!

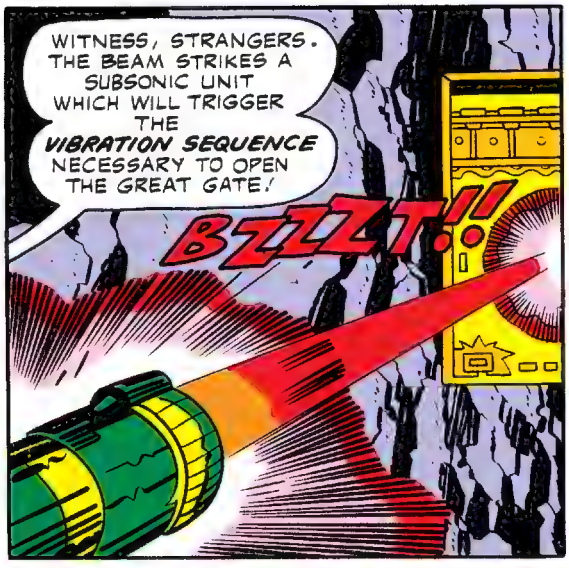

BELIEVE ME, WARRIOR! I ONLY WISH TO MAINTAIN PEACE BETWEEN US!
ONLY THE PEACE OF DEATH CAN HELP ME NOW! USE THE SWORD! THRUST IT DEEP!
CUT SHORT MY IMMORTALITY!!

THE SACRED WATER PRESERVES THEIR BODIES, BUT THEY CAN FALL IN COMBAT!
THEN THE RONIN CAN PERISH IF THEY SUFFER A FATAL BLOW?!?

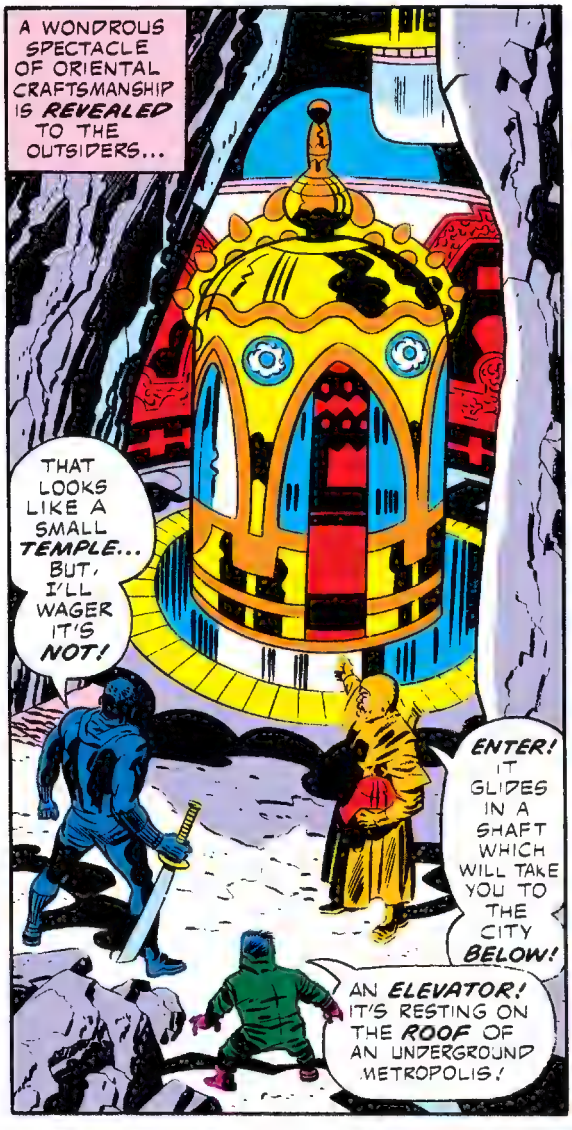
IT SEEMS FOOLISH TO GIVE UP IMMORTALITY SO WILLINGLY!
THE SAMURAI ARE PROUD AS WELL AS FIERCE! THIS ONE HAS LOST FACE! HIS ONLY SOLUTION IS HARA KIRI... WHAT WE CALL SUICIDE!!

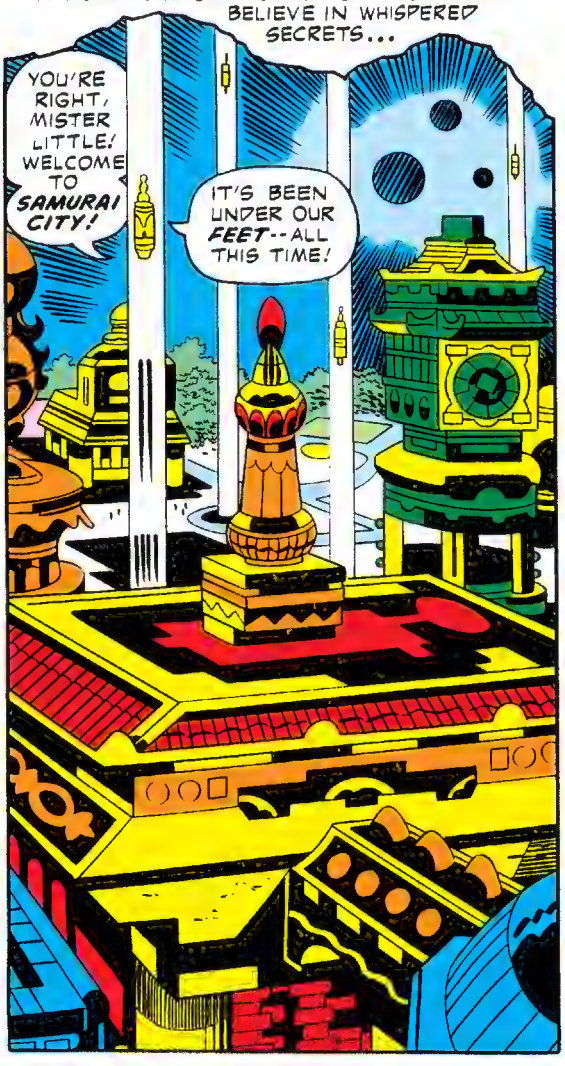

I AM T'CHALLA, RULER OF THE WAKANDAS!
IT IS NO DISGRACE TO LOSE A FIGHT AT MY HANDS!
BESIDES... YOU WERE MERELY DECEIVED BY A DESPERATE RUSE!
NO MATTER! I'VE FAILED IN MY DUTY!
I MUST DIE--!


THEN, AS VICTOR, I CANNOT PERMIT IT! A WAKANDA WARRIOR IS HONOR-BOUND TO SHOW MERCY TO A BEATEN FOE!
HOW CAN THIS DILEMMA BE RESOLVED? I AM LEFT TO LIVE MY LIFE IN ETERNAL SHAME!
THAT'S A WORN CLICHÉ--BUT A SOUND IDEA!
THE PROPER AUTHORITY CAN MAKE THE DECISION! ASK HIM TO TAKE US TO HIS LEADER!
WHOEVER RULES HERE IS THE ONE TO SOLVE THIS ISSUE!
IF THERE IS NO OTHER WAY...
I WON'T AGREE TO ANY OTHER. YOUR FATE REMAINS IN MY HANDS! I WILL RELINQUISH IT ONLY TO AN EQUAL IN RANK!
VERY WELL. WE SHALL ENTER THE HIDDEN GATEWAY TO MY CITY!
LOOK--! HE'S ACTIVATED SOME SORT OF DEVICE IN THE ROCK WALL!
THIS IS THE PLACE OF THE KEY! THE GATE WILL NOT OPEN UNLESS THIS IS USED!
TO THE ASTONISHMENT OF HIS ONLOOKERS, THE WARRIOR UNLEASHES A LASER BEAM...
WE SAMURAIS HAVE NOT PASSED THE CENTURIES WITHOUT KEEPING ABREAST OF YOUR TECHNICAL ACHIEVEMENTS!
INCREDIBLE! AN ANCIENT CULTURE HAS KEPT ITS TRADITIONS INTACT IN A WORLD OF MODERN WONDERS!
THE LASER RAY IS MAKING CONTACT WITH THAT EXPOSED DEVICE!


WITNESS, STRANGERS. THE BEAM STRIKES A SUBSONIC UNIT WHICH WILL TRIGGER THE VIBRATION SEQUENCE NECESSARY TO OPEN THE GREAT GATE!
BZZZT!!

RRRUUMM!!
THE ENTIRE CLIFF WALL--IS MOVING--OPENING!
I-IT'S THE GATE--!

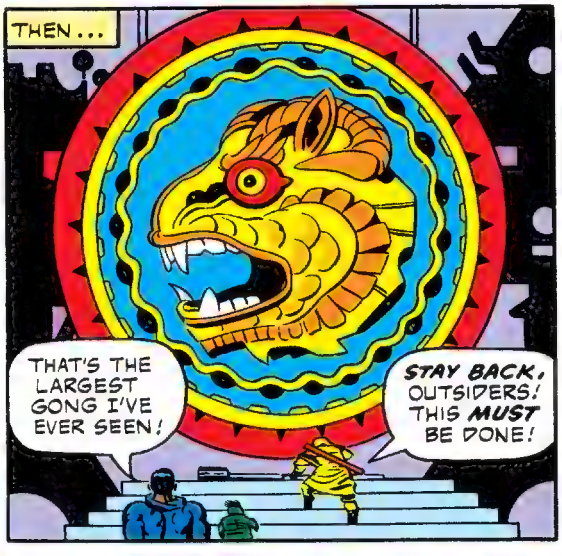

A WONDROUS SPECTACLE OF ORIENTAL CRAFTSMANSHIP IS REVEALED TO THE OUTSIDERS...
THAT LOOKS LIKE A SMALL TEMPLE... BUT, I'LL WAGER IT'S NOT!
ENTER! IT GLIDES IN A SHAFT WHICH WILL TAKE YOU TO THE CITY BELOW!
AN ELEVATOR! IT'S RESTING ON THE ROOF OF AN UNDERGROUND METROPOLIS!


MOMENTS LATER, THE TRIO DESCENDS UPON A CUSHION OF COMPRESSED AIR INTO A DOMAIN KNOWN ONLY TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN WHISPERED SECRETS...
YOU'RE RIGHT, MISTER LITTLE! WELCOME TO SAMURAI CITY!
IT'S BEEN UNDER OUR FEET--ALL THIS TIME!

WHEN GROUND LEVEL IS REACHED...
TO THINK THAT ALL THIS WAS BEGUN BY NINE RONIN WHO'D FLED ANCIENT WARS--IT'S ALMOST INCONCEIV-ABLE!!
I'M CERTAIN THERE'S MORE TO THIS STORY!
THIS WAY... FOLLOW ME!

THESE ARE THE PEASANTRY, DECENDANTS OF THOSE HUNDREDS WE CONQUERED IN ANCIENT DAYS!
SO THAT'S HOW THE CITY WAS BUILT!
HAIL TO AKIRO--SEVENTH OF THE NINE RONIN!

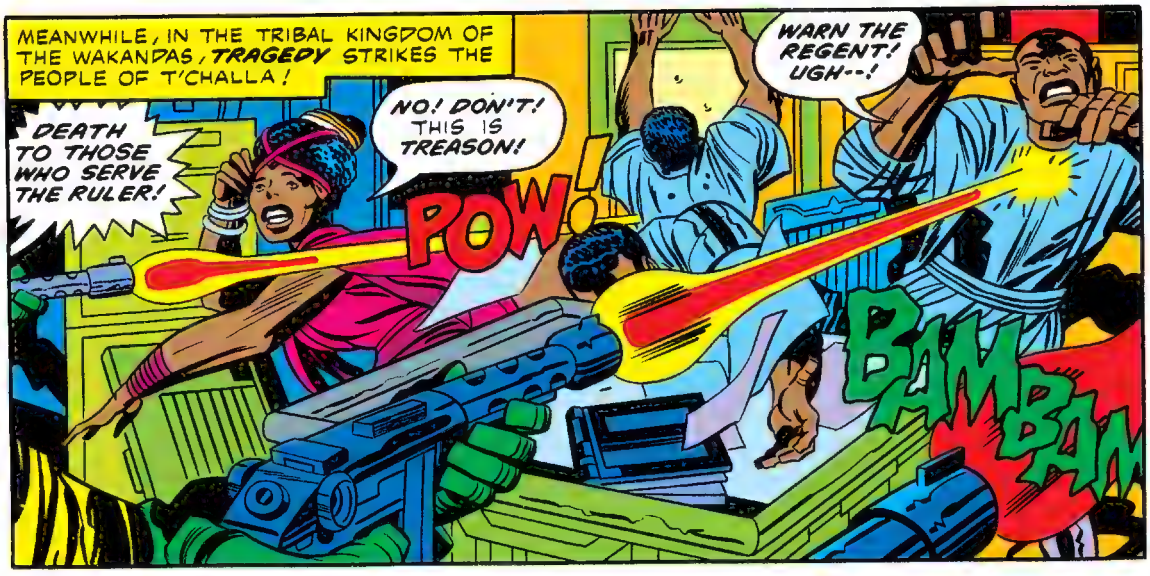
SEE, BROTHERS! THE OUTSIDER CARRIES AKIRO'S SWORD! THE HONOR IS FORBIDDEN TO ALL EXCEPT THE SAMURAI!
BUT...THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE--! THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY THE OUTSIDER COULD HAVE GOTTEN IT!
HE'S DEFEATED AKIRO IN BATTLE!


THEN...
THAT'S THE LARGEST GONG I'VE EVER SEEN!
STAY BACK, OUTSIDERS! THIS MUST BE DONE!

THERE IS NO GREATER DISASTER THAN THE LOSS OF FACE BY ONE WHO LIVED AS A SYMBOL OF INVINCIBILITY UNTIL THIS DAY!
LET ALL WHO HAVE LOOKED REVERENTLY TO THE STRENGTH OF AKIRO BE WITNESS TO HIS MISERABLE DOWNFALL!
NO! NO, WAIT!

BONGGG!

THE ECHOES FROM THAT GONG ARE BURSTING MY SKULL! I MUST FIND SURCEASE FROM THESE DEVILISH CUSTOMS!
PERSONALLY, I LOOK FORWARD TO A SIX MONTH HEADACHE!
WE'VE GOT TO MOVE QUICKLY, T'CHALLA! WE MUST LOCATE THE PRIZE WE CAME FOR -- AND DEPART BEFORE THESE RITUALS KILL US!
THE RITUALS DON'T CONCERN ME ANYMORE... TURN AROUND, MISTER LITTLE.
AKIRO!
WHAT IS THIS?!? THE STRANGER HAS YOUR SWORD!
EASY, FRIEND! DON'T LOSE YOUR TEMPER!
GREAT GALAXIES!
THESE TWO ARE NOT TO BE HARMED! MY FATE IS IN THEIR HANDS!
ARE YOU MAD?!? HE SULLIES A RONIN BLADE!
I TOOK THIS WEAPON WITHOUT KNOWING OF THE GRAVE MISFORTUNE IT WOULD BRING UPON ITS TRUE OWNER!
HE SPEAKS THE TRUTH! IF THIS IS NOT RESOLVED, I CAN NEITHER LIVE NOR DIE!
WE ARE HERE TO DECIDE HOW IT CAN BE RETURNED TO AKIRO WITH HONOR!
WOE BE TO US ALL THIS DAY, AKIRO! YOU'VE BROUGHT SHAME TO THE RONIN!
A SWORD MAKES A POOR JUDGE! WE'D RATHER PETITION YOUR LEADER!
LET MY SWORD END YOUR DILEMMA!
HE MUST HEAR THIS OUT!
WE GO TO SHINZU!


MEANWHILE, IN THE TRIBAL KINGDOM OF THE WAKANDAS, TRAGEDY STRIKES THE PEOPLE OF T'CHALLA!
DEATH TO THOSE WHO SERVE THE RULER!
NO! DON'T! THIS IS TREASON!
POW!
WARN THE REGENT! UGH--!
BAM BAM

THE ADMINISTRATION OFFICES ARE CLEARED OF OPPOSITION! ON TO THE REGENT'S CHAMBER!
WE MUST TAKE THE OLD MAN BEFORE HE CAN ALERT THE LOYAL TROOPS!
RATAT!
THIS WAY! MOVE QUICKLY!!

STAND WHERE YOU ARE, N'GASSI! WE'RE TAKING CHARGE--AND STRIPPING YOU OF YOUR DUTIES!
ONLY T'CHALLA CAN DO THAT! UNTIL HE RETURNS, I ALONE AM ENTRUSTED WITH THE AFFAIRS OF THIS DOMAIN!

MANGY OLD DOG! ARE YOU BLIND TO THESE WEAPONS?! YOUR AUTHORITY IS MEANINGLESS ONCE WE CHOOSE TO FIRE!
THINK, TRAITOR! DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT IT MEANS TO SHATTER THE STRUCTURE OF THE PANTHER CULT?
DO AS YOU'RE ORDERED AND SAVE YOUR HIDE!
WHO LED YOU TO THIS SORRY ACT?!

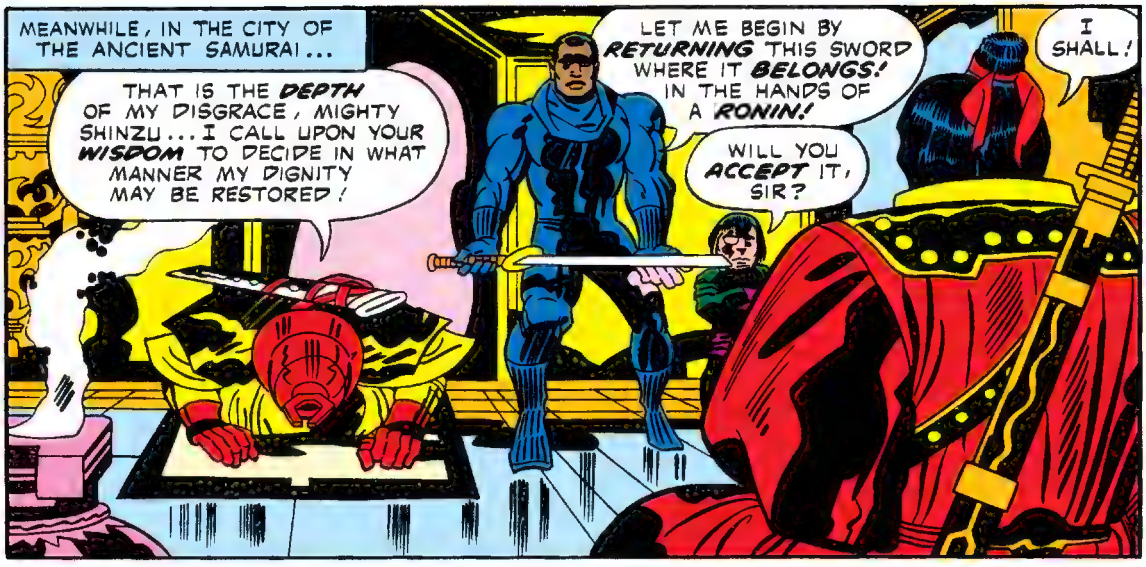
THE ANSWER WILL COME TO YOU SOON ENOUGH...THAT IS, IF DEATH DOESN'T CLAIM YOU FIRST!
DON'T SHOOT HIM! LET HIM SEE THE FACE OF HIS SUCCESSOR!

LONG LIVE GENERAL JAKARRA--RULER OF THE WAKANDAS AND FIRST GUARDIAN OF THE PANTHER CULT!
A RATHER IMPRESSIVE TITLE, EH N'GASSI?

IT WAS WASTED ON ONE SUCH AS T'CHALLA! IT'S TIME FOR THE WAKANDA NAME TO ACHIEVE NEW AND GREATER PROMINENCE!
YOUR CURSED ENVY OF T'CHALLA WILL LEAD US ALL TO DESTRUCTION! I WARN YOU--BE CONTENT WITH THE RANK YOU'VE EARNED!

NEVER! I WAS NOT ONLY BORN SMALL AND FRAIL, BUT THE KING'S WIFE--MY MOTHER--WAS FROM ANOTHER TRIBE!
LONG AGO, I KNEW THIS WAS IN YOUR HEART--BUT I SAID NOTHING!
DO YOU KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO BE T'CHALLA'S HALF-BROTHER?
--TO BE KEPT OUT OF SIGHT IN FOREIGN MILITARY SCHOOLS--
--TO RETURN AND LIVE IN T'CHALLA'S SHADOW?!?

NOW, WE SHALL ALL PAY FOR THE SELF-HATRED WHICH HAS DRIVEN LITTLE MEN WITH TALL DREAMS FOR CENTURIES!
MY DREAMS SHALL SUCCEED, OLD ONE! YOU SEE, I'VE BEEN BUSY IN THE VIBRANIUM MOUND! THIS MYSTIC METAL GUARDED BY OUR TRIBES HAS RARE AND SURPRISING PROPERTIES!
THEY SHALL MAKE ME WHAT I WAS MEANT TO BE--
--A WORLD CONQUEROR!!


MEANWHILE, IN THE CITY OF THE ANCIENT SAMURAI...
THAT IS THE DEPTH OF MY DISGRACE, MIGHTY SHINZU... I CALL UPON YOUR WISDOM TO DECIDE IN WHAT MANNER MY DIGNITY MAY BE RESTORED!
LET ME BEGIN BY RETURNING THIS SWORD WHERE IT BELONGS! IN THE HANDS OF A RONIN!
WILL YOU ACCEPT IT, SIR?
I SHALL!

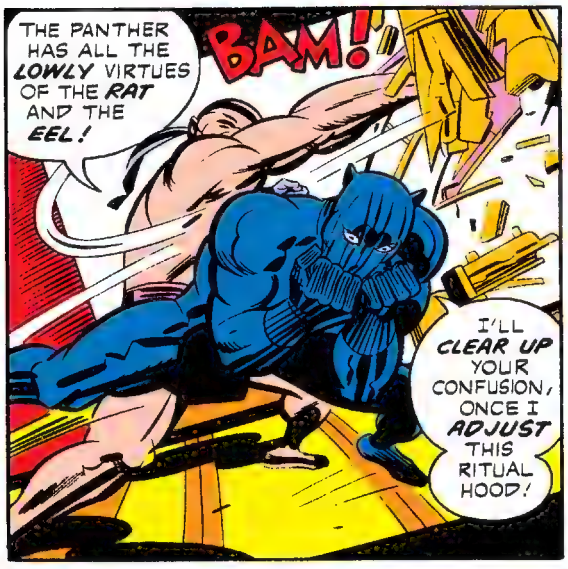
WE THANK YOU, SHINZU! IT WAS NOT WON BY SWORDSMANSHIP -- BUT TAKEN BY THE POWER OF A FIST!
THAT POWER MUST NOW WIN BACK THE HIGH ESTEEM IN WHICH AKIRO WAS ONCE HELD!

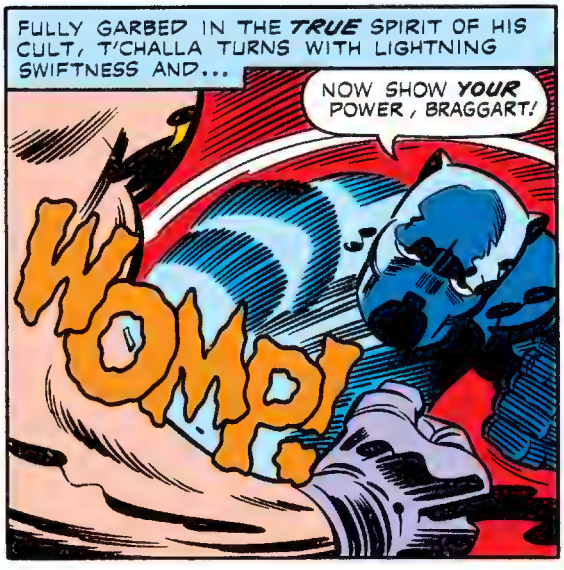
WHAT DOES HE MEAN, MISTER LITTLE? I DETECT A GRUDGE FIGHT IN THE OFFING!
IT'S NOTHING YOU CAN'T HANDLE, T'CHALLA!
IN THE LAND OF THE RONIN WE LIVE BY SHINZU'S WORD!

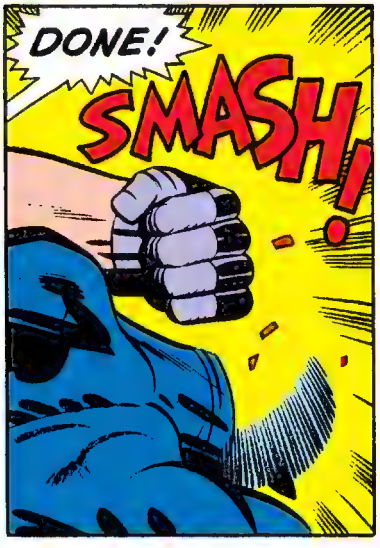
HOWEVER, IF T'CHALLA DOES WIN THIS MATCH, IT WOULD BE SPORTING OF YOU TO GIVE US A SAMPLE OF YOUR WATER OF IMMORTALITY!!
IT IS THE VAIN DREAM OF ALL OUTSIDERS WHO SEEK OUT THIS DOMAIN!

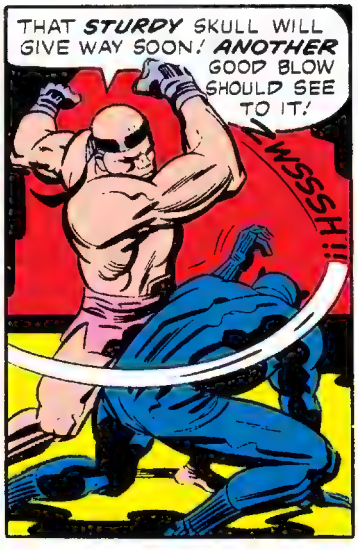
ER-- FORGIVE HIS IMPETUOUS REQUEST! WE ASK ONLY FOR AKIRO'S REDEMPTION!
THE HEART OF THE PANTHER IS INDEED LARGER THAN THE GNAT'S!
RELEASE ME, YOU OAF!

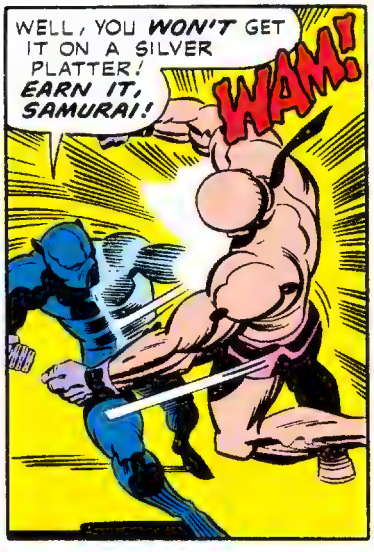
YOU SHALL FIGHT AGAIN WITH THE FIST AGAINST ONE SCHOOLED IN THE ART.
WIN OR LOSE-- IT WILL BE YOUR WORTHINESS AS A FOE WHICH WILL PROVE AKIRO'S RIGHT TO REMAIN AS A RONIN!
BONGG!
THEN...
POW!
RISE AND SHOW YOUR POWER, FOREIGN DOG--!
MISTER LITTLE-- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? I THINK THEY DROPPED THE CEILING ON US!
DON'T GET UP, PANTHER! IN THIS CASE IT WOULD BE WISER TO PLAY DEAD-- OR MEET THE UNPLEASANT REALITY!
I--UNDER--STAND--!
BUT--THERE-- SEEMS--TO--BE-- NO--EASY--WAY-- OUT--OF--THIS-- MATCH--!
SPARE ME NOT THE WONDER OF YOUR SKILL, STRANGER! TEACH ME HUMILITY, IF YOU CAN!
STARS AND COMETS! TEACH HIM HUMILITY!
NOW THAT'S A SOUND SUGGESTION! SINCE I HAVE NO CHOICE!
KRAK!
I THINK I OUGHT TO TELL YOU-- HE'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE!

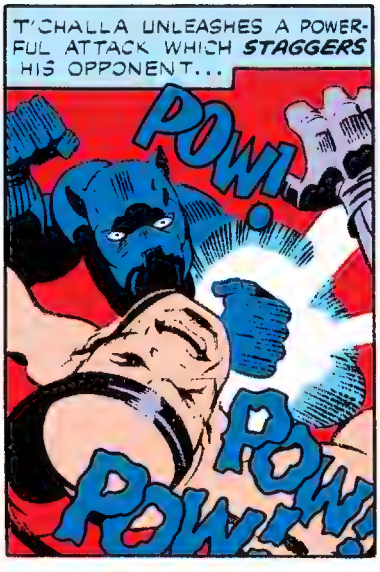

THE PANTHER HAS ALL THE LOWLY VIRTUES OF THE RAT AND THE EEL!
BAM!
I'LL CLEAR UP YOUR CONFUSION, ONCE I ADJUST THIS RITUAL HOOD!


FULLY GARBED IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF HIS CULT, T'CHALLA TURNS WITH LIGHTNING SWIFTNESS AND...
NOW SHOW YOUR POWER, BRAGGART!
WOMP!


DONE!
SMASH!

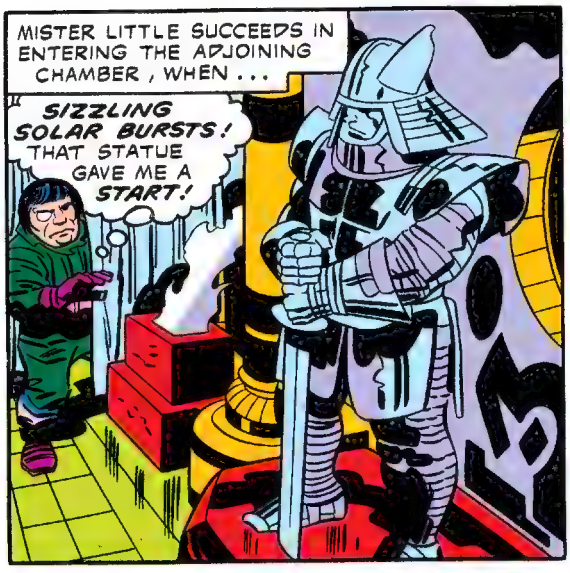

THAT STURDY SKULL WILL GIVE WAY SOON! ANOTHER GOOD BLOW SHOULD SEE TO IT!
WSSSH!!!


WELL, YOU WON'T GET IT ON A SILVER PLATTER! EARN IT, SAMURAI!
WAM!


T'CHALLA UNLEASHES A POWERFUL ATTACK WHICH STAGGERS HIS OPPONENT...
POW!
POW!
POW!

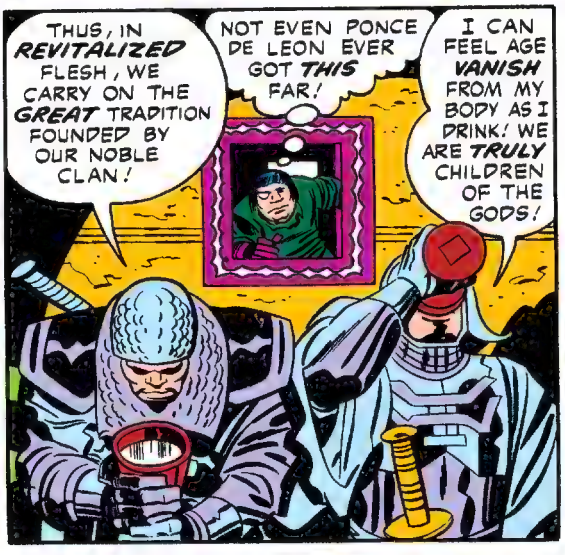
THE GRUELLING BATTLE CONTINUES IN A WEARING TEST OF STRENGTH AND STAMINA!
T'CHALLA SEEMS TO HAVE SEIZED CONTROL OF THE BATTLE!

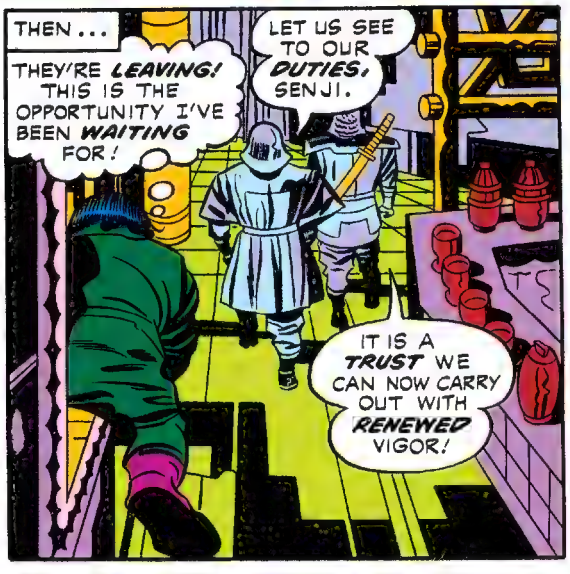
WAM!
KRAK!
BUT WHILE OUR CAPTORS' EYES ARE RIVETED ON THE ACTION, I MAY SLIP OUT UNNOTICED!


MISTER LITTLE SUCCEEDS IN ENTERING THE ADJOINING CHAMBER, WHEN ...
SIZZLING SOLAR BURSTS! THAT STATUE GAVE ME A START!

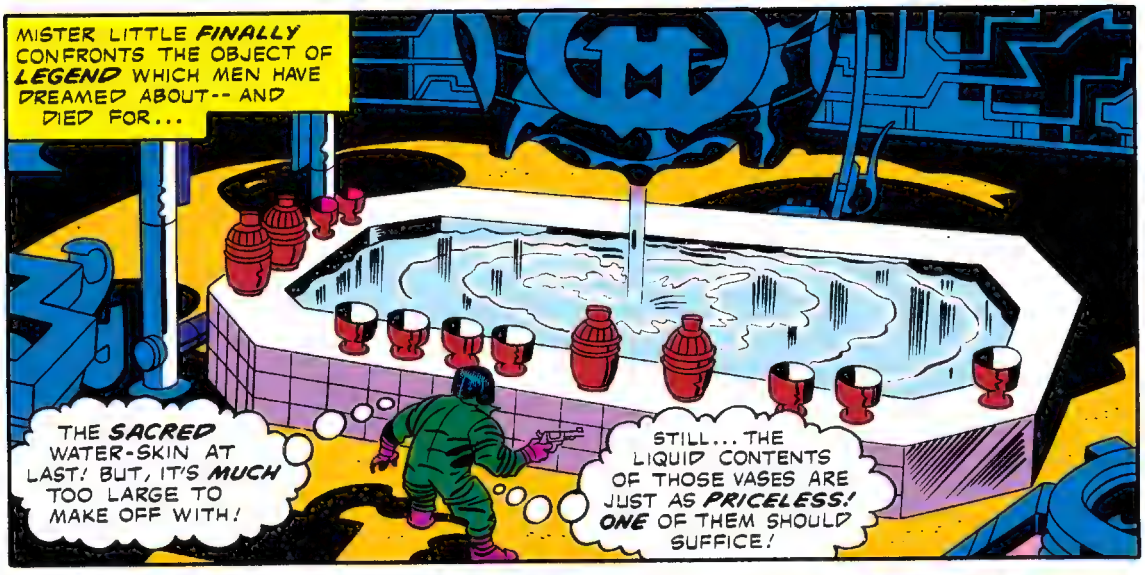
HOWEVER, IT'S UNLIKELY TO BETRAY MY PRESENCE. IF OL' LADY LUCK STAYS AT MY SIDE, THE POSSIBILITY OF FINDING THE SACRED SAMURAI WATERSKIN WILL INCREASE EACH MOMENT I'M FREE!
IT'S GOT TO BE HERE -- IN THE HALL OF THE RONIN! MY MAP COULDN'T LIE--!

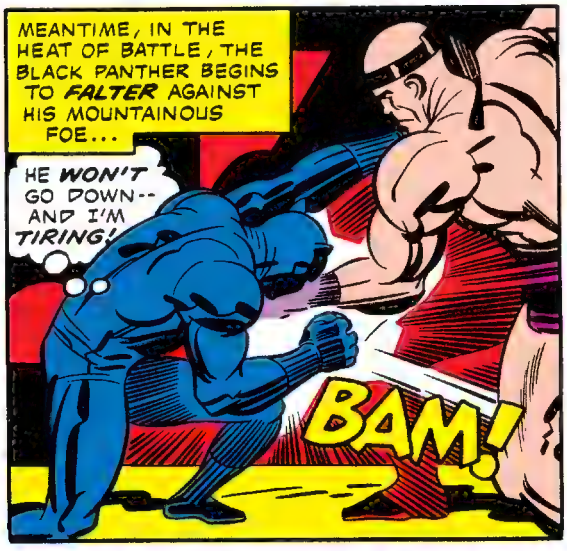
AFTER WANDERING UNDISCOVERED, THE COLLECTOR IS DRAWN TO THE SOUND OF VOICES...
BY JUPITER'S MYRIAD MOONS!
IT IS TIME, SENJI! FILL YOUR CUP AND LIVE AS A RONIN FOR THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS!

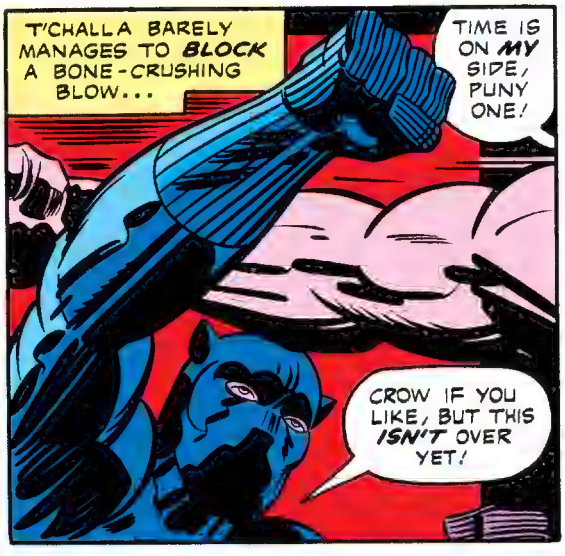

THUS, IN REVITALIZED FLESH, WE CARRY ON THE GREAT TRADITION FOUNDED BY OUR NOBLE CLAN!
NOT EVEN PONCE DE LEON EVER GOT THIS FAR!
I CAN FEEL AGE VANISH FROM MY BODY AS I DRINK! WE ARE TRULY CHILDREN OF THE GODS!


THEN...
THEY'RE LEAVING! THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!
LET US SEE TO OUR DUTIES, SENJI.
IT IS A TRUST WE CAN NOW CARRY OUT WITH RENEWED VIGOR!

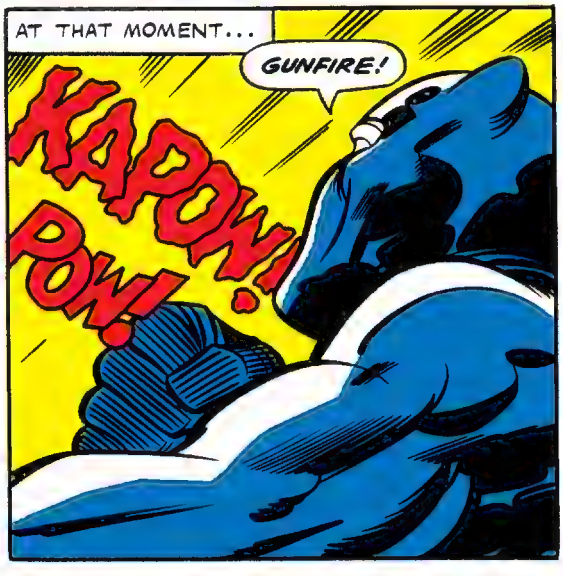
AND THIS IS A TASK WHICH REQUIRES THE IMMEDIATE APPLIANCE OF THE MENTAL AGILITY I'M SO FAMOUS FOR.
I'VE STILL GOT MY PISTOL, AND TIME ENOUGH TO GET WHAT I CAME FOR!

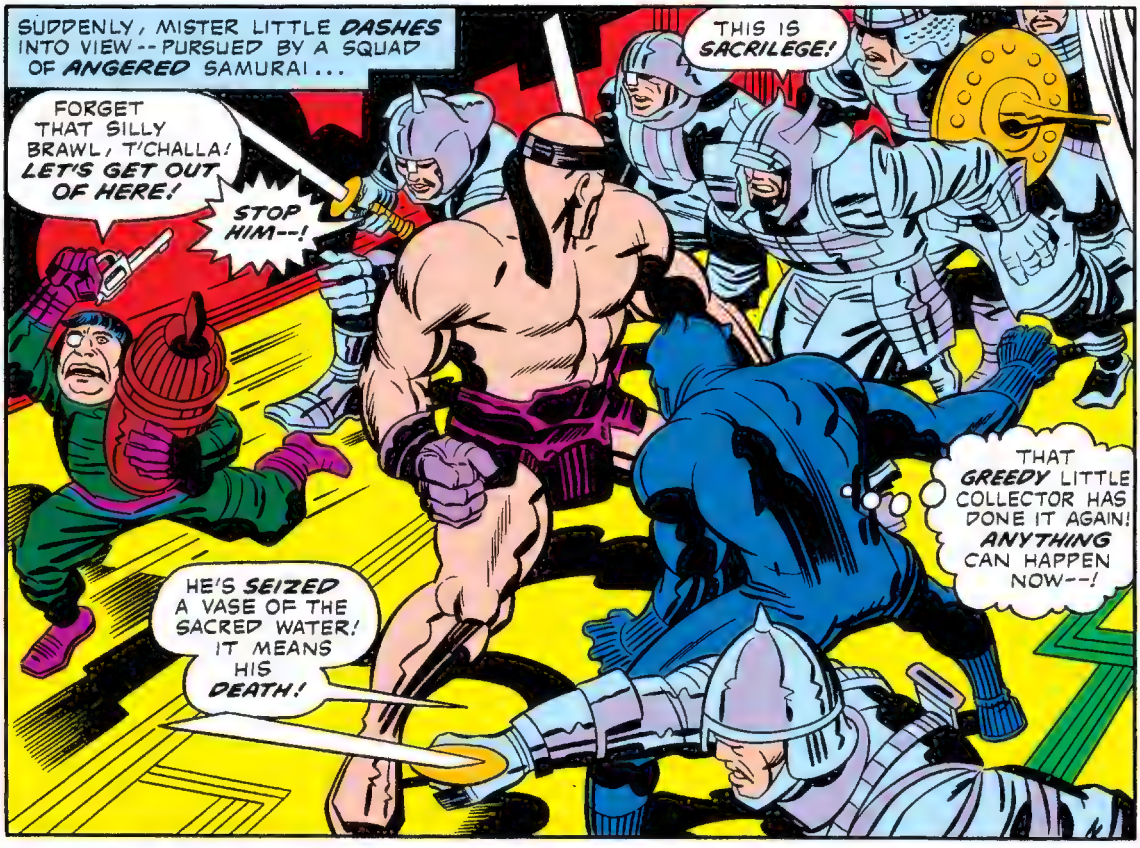

MISTER LITTLE FINALLY CONFRONTS THE OBJECT OF LEGEND WHICH MEN HAVE DREAMED ABOUT-- AND DIED FOR...
THE SACRED WATER-SKIN AT LAST! BUT, IT'S MUCH TOO LARGE TO MAKE OFF WITH!
STILL... THE LIQUID CONTENTS OF THOSE VASES ARE JUST AS PRICELESS! ONE OF THEM SHOULD SUFFICE!

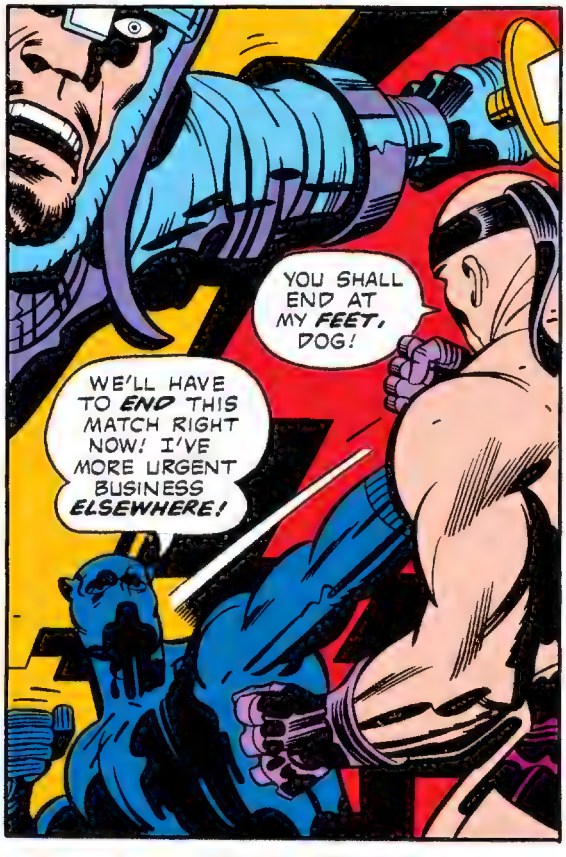

MEANTIME, IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, THE BLACK PANTHER BEGINS TO FALTER AGAINST HIS MOUNTAINOUS FOE...
HE WON'T GO DOWN-- AND I'M TIRING!
BAM!


T'CHALLA BARELY MANAGES TO BLOCK A BONE-CRUSHING BLOW...
TIME IS ON MY SIDE, PUNY ONE!
CROW IF YOU LIKE, BUT THIS ISN'T OVER YET!

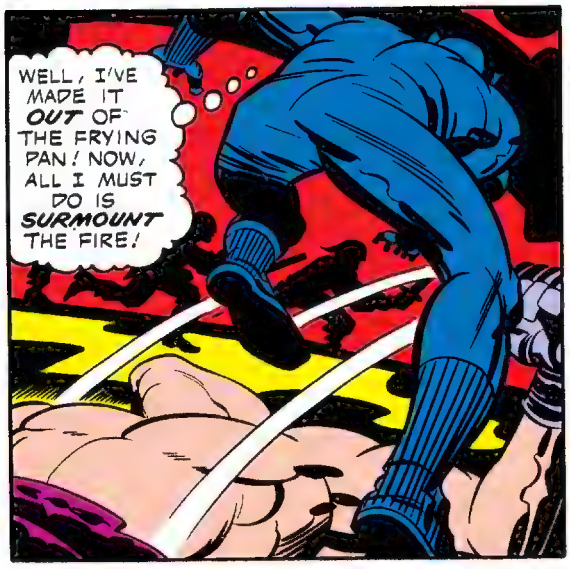
A WAKANDA WARRIOR HAS HIDDEN RESERVOIRS OF STRENGTH THAT SERVE HIM WHEN ALL SEEMS LOST!

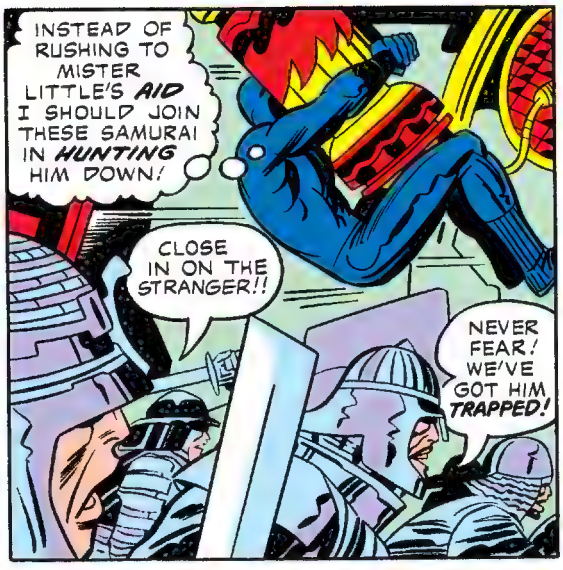

AT THAT MOMENT...
GUNFIRE!
KAPOW!
POW!

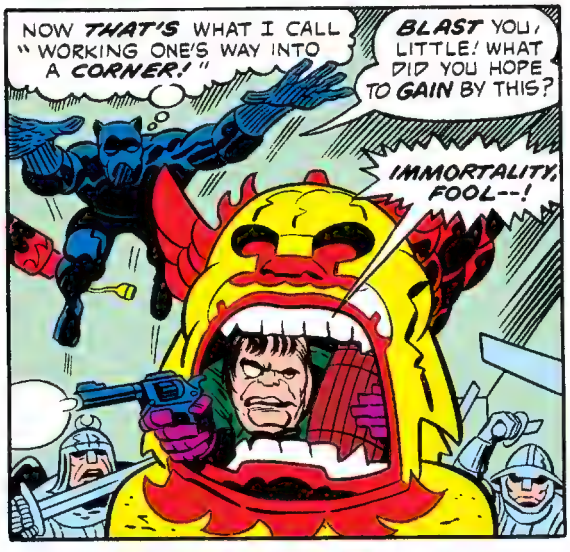

SUDDENLY, MISTER LITTLE DASHES INTO VIEW--PURSUED BY A SQUAD OF ANGERED SAMURAI...
THIS IS SACRILEGE!
FORGET THAT SILLY BRAWL, T'CHALLA! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
STOP HIM--!
THAT GREEDY LITTLE COLLECTOR HAS DONE IT AGAIN! ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN NOW--!
HE'S SEIZED A VASE OF THE SACRED WATER! IT MEANS HIS DEATH!

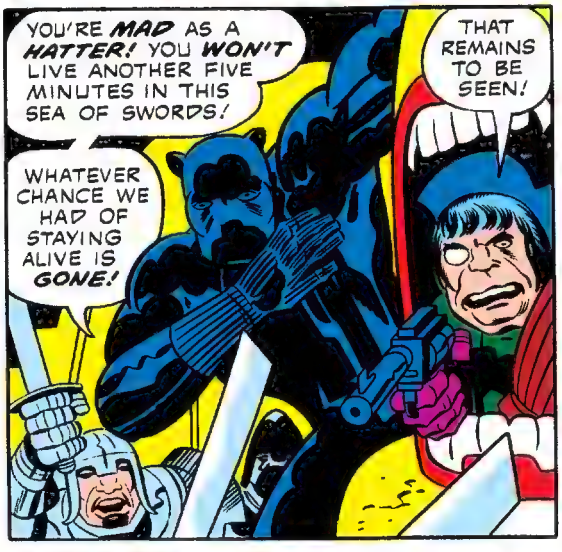


T'CHALLA FORCES A TREMENDOUS SURGE OF POWER TO HIS LIMBS AND DELIVERS A BLOW WHICH SHATTERS ALL RESISTANCE BEFORE HIM!

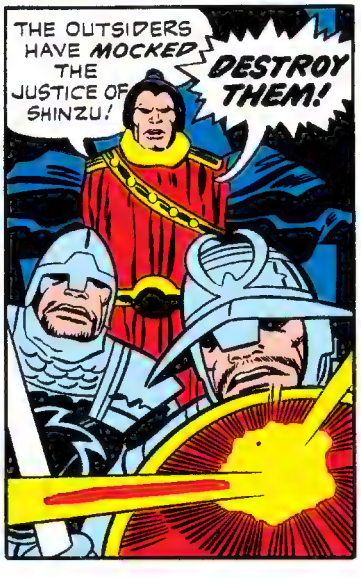

WELL, I'VE MADE IT OUT OF THE FRYING PAN! NOW, ALL I MUST DO IS SURMOUNT THE FIRE!


INSTEAD OF RUSHING TO MISTER LITTLE'S AID I SHOULD JOIN THESE SAMURAI IN HUNTING HIM DOWN!
CLOSE IN ON THE STRANGER!!
NEVER FEAR! WE'VE GOT HIM TRAPPED!

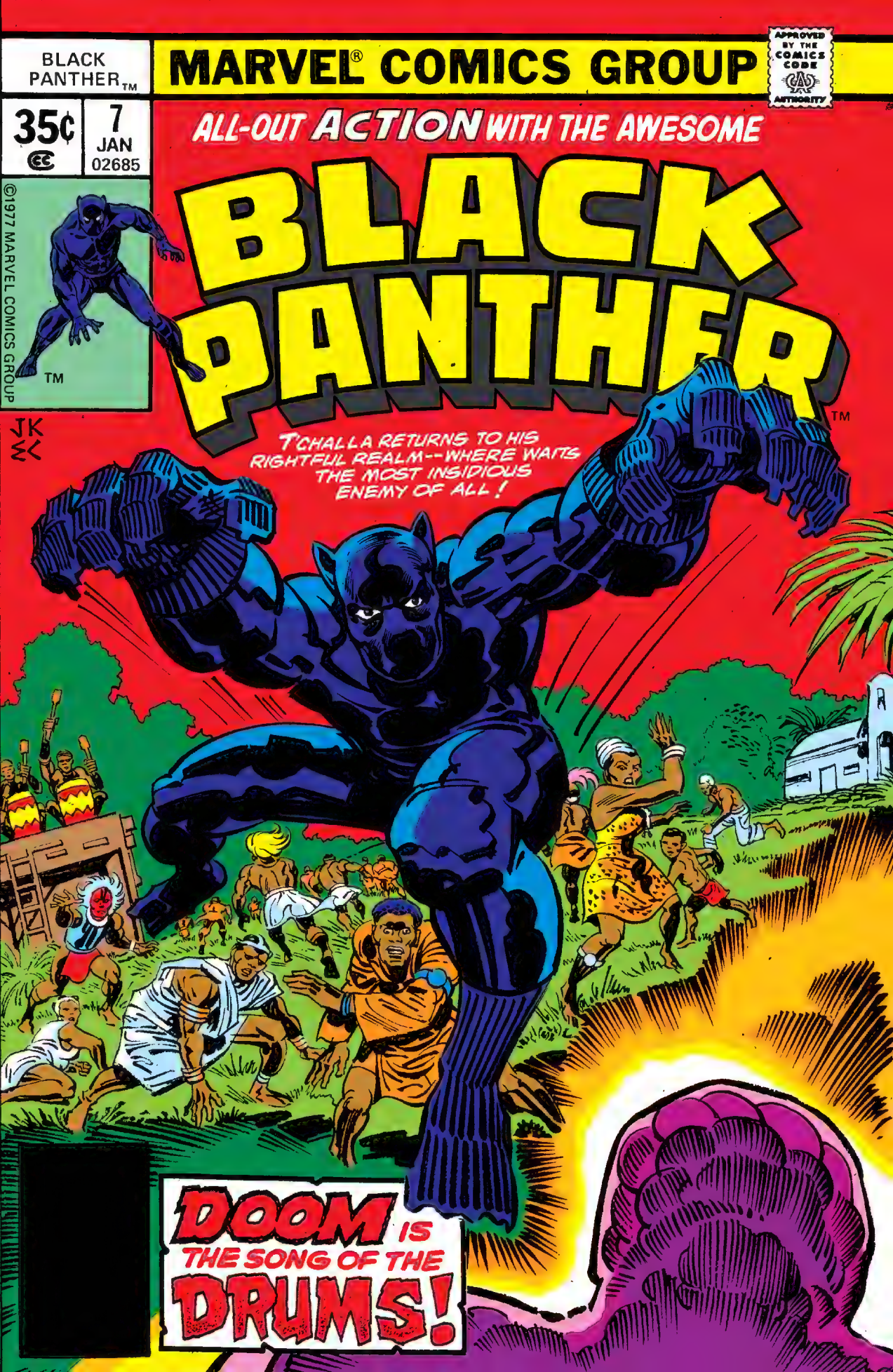

NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL "WORKING ONE'S WAY INTO A CORNER!"
BLAST YOU, LITTLE! WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN BY THIS?
IMMORTALITY, FOOL--!


YOU'RE MAD AS A HATTER! YOU WON'T LIVE ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES IN THIS SEA OF SWORDS!
THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN!
WHATEVER CHANCE WE HAD OF STAYING ALIVE IS GONE!

NO ONE BEFORE ME HAS HAD THE BLACK PANTHER AT HIS SIDE! HELP ME TO ESCAPE, T'CHALLA, AND SHARE THE WATER OF ETERNAL YOUTH!


THE OUTSIDERS HAVE MOCKED THE JUSTICE OF SHINZU!
DESTROY THEM!

FOR THE BLACK PANTHER AND MISTER LITTLE, THINGS ALWAYS LOOK BAD BEFORE THEY GET WORSE! BE SURE TO BE HERE NEXT TIME--TO LISTEN FOR--
THE DRUMS


BLACK PANTHER™
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ALL-OUT ACTION WITH THE AWESOME
BLACK PANTHER™
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T'CHALLA RETURNS TO HIS RIGHTFUL REALM--WHERE WAITS THE MOST INSIDIOUS ENEMY OF ALL!
DOOM IS THE SONG OF THE DRUMS!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

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HAVING DOGGEDLY TRACKED THE MYSTERIES OF THIS LOST CITY OF SAMURAI, T'CHALLA NOW LEARNS AN EVEN **GREATER** MYSTERY LIES HIDDEN BACK IN AFRICA, AMONG HIS **OWN** PEOPLE. THE ENIGMA HAS SHAPED THE BLACK PANTHER CULT. IT IS THE SOURCE FROM WHICH HIS FAMILY DRAWS ITS DISTINCTION. AND NOW, IT **BEATS** LIKE A MONSTROUS HEART TO THE RHYTHM OF DANGER...

DRUMS!

SHEATH YOUR SWORDS, SAMURAI--LEST YOU SLAY A WARRIOR WHO HAS HONORED YOUR CODE!
THAT'S IT, T'CHALLA! STALL THEM! SAY ANYTHING--ANYTHING!

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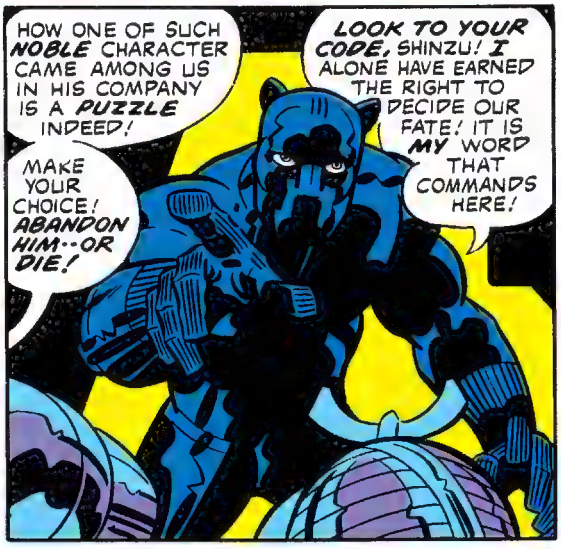
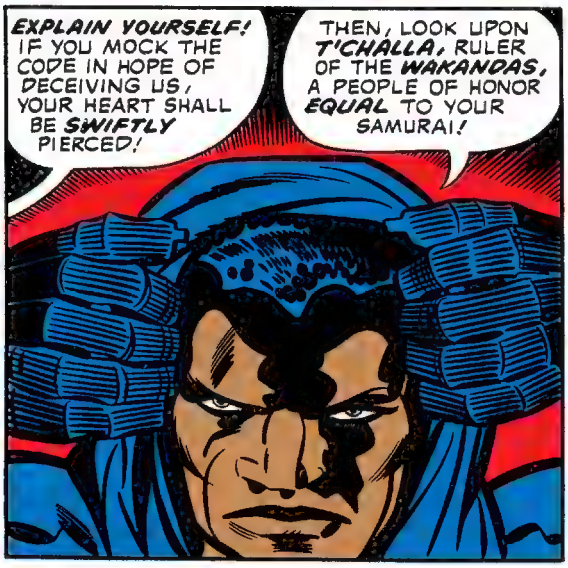
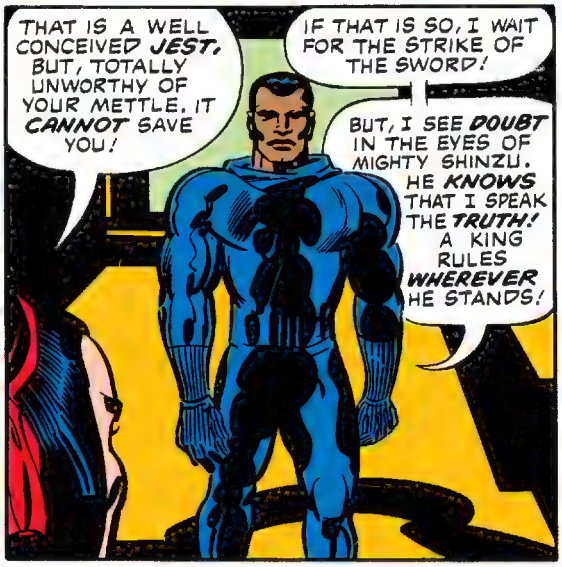
THAT TINY MAGGOT IS A THIEF WITHOUT HONOR! YET YOU WOULD DEFEND HIM WITH YOUR LIFE!
HE IS A HARMLESS VICTIM OF HIS OWN GREED! MUST HE DIE FOR THIS?
EVEN NOW HE CLINGS TO A FLASK OF OUR SACRED WATER! THE GNAT STOLE IT--! THE GNAT SHALL DIE FOR IT!

MIGHTY SHINZU'S WORD IS BOTH TRUTH AND JUSTICE! IT MUST BE OBEYED!!
IF YOU WISH TO PERISH IN THE CAUSE OF SUCH AN UNWORTHY COMPANION-- IT IS YOUR OWN CHOICE!


HOW ONE OF SUCH NOBLE CHARACTER CAME AMONG US IN HIS COMPANY IS A PUZZLE INDEED!
MAKE YOUR CHOICE! ABANDON HIM--OR DIE!
LOOK TO YOUR CODE, SHINZU! I ALONE HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO DECIDE OUR FATE! IT IS MY WORD THAT COMMANDS HERE!

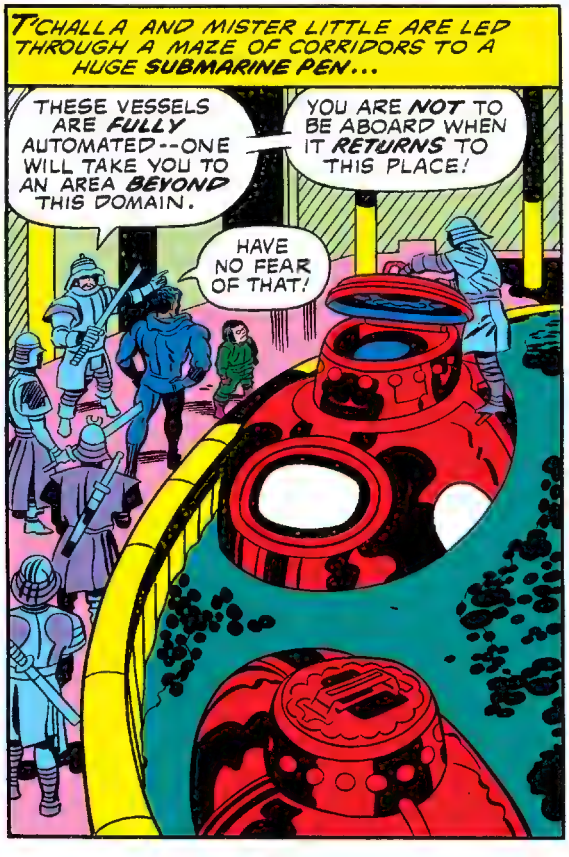

EXPLAIN YOURSELF! IF YOU MOCK THE CODE IN HOPE OF DECEIVING US, YOUR HEART SHALL BE SWIFTLY PIERCED!
THEN, LOOK UPON T'CHALLA, RULER OF THE WAKANDAS, A PEOPLE OF HONOR EQUAL TO YOUR SAMURAI!

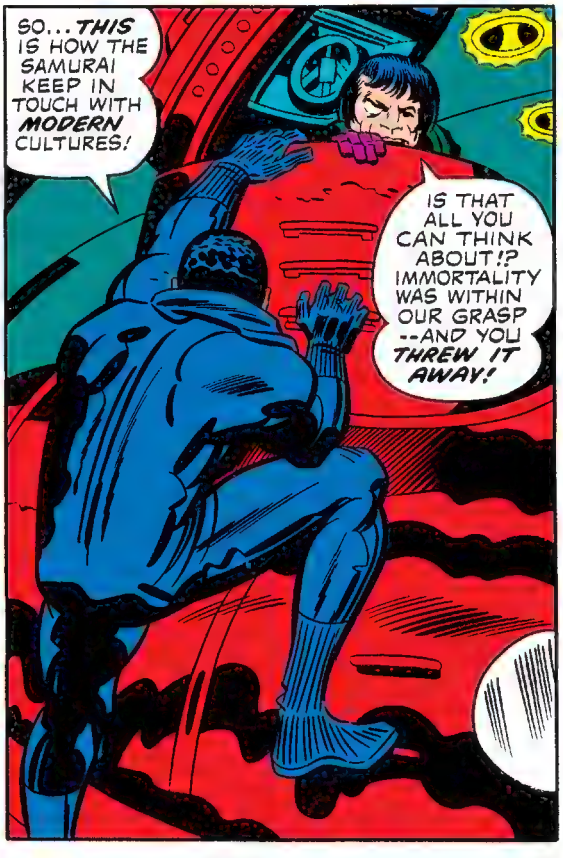

THAT IS A WELL CONCEIVED JEST, BUT, TOTALLY UNWORTHY OF YOUR METTLE, IT CANNOT SAVE YOU!
IF THAT IS SO, I WAIT FOR THE STRIKE OF THE SWORD!
BUT, I SEE DOUBT IN THE EYES OF MIGHTY SHINZU. HE KNOWS THAT I SPEAK THE TRUTH! A KING RULES WHEREVER HE STANDS!

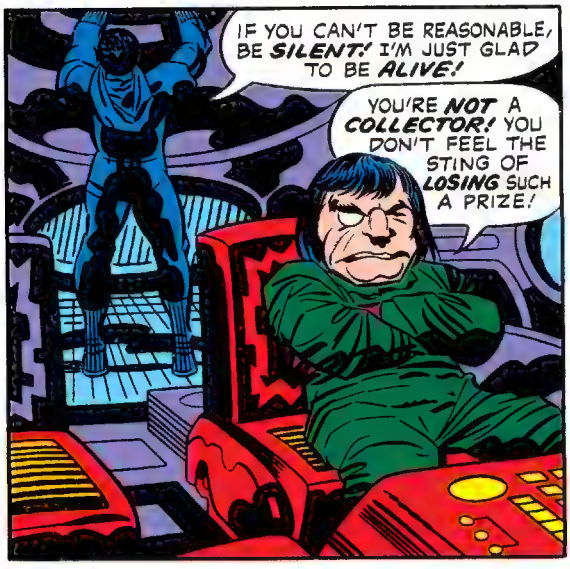
AND WHO BUT A TRUE KING CAN DISPENSE JUSTICE THAT SETTLES AN ISSUE?
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, T'CHALLA? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO!?
I'M CLAIMING DIP-LOMATIC IMMUNITY TO SAVE YOUR MISERABLE HIDE, ABNER LITTLE!
NOW, GIVE ME THAT WATER JUG!
NO--! NO!!
LET ME GO, YOU MOUND OF MUSCLE! I'VE DROPPED THE JUG!!
THE THING IS MADE OF METAL --IT WON'T SPILL A DROP!
DON'T TAKE MY PISTOL, T'CHALLA! I WON'T LAST A MINUTE ONCE I'M DISARMED!
I'M YOUR ONLY DEFENSE! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT, YOU FOOL!? NOW... SIMMER DOWN AND LET ME DO THE TALKING!
IF YOU PLAN TO TALK US OUT OF THE WATER OF IMMORTALITY, I-I'LL KILL YOU, T'CHALLA --! I'LL KILL YOU!!
DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT YOUR GREED IS SHOWING!
BEHOLD, SHINZU -- I RETURN THIS PRICELESS WATER TO ITS RIGHTFUL GUARDIANS.
YOU ARE WISE TO GIVE FREELY WHAT WE COULD EASILY TAKE!

I'VE DONE WHAT YOUR LAWS HAVE DEMANDED OF ME. AS RULER OF THE WAKANDAS, I REQUEST THAT YOU HONOR MINE!
PERMIT US TO LEAVE IN PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!
ONLY YOUR DEPARTURE WILL BRING US PEACE!
SAMURAI! SEND THESE TWO ON THEIR WAY BY OUR SWIFTEST ROUTE!

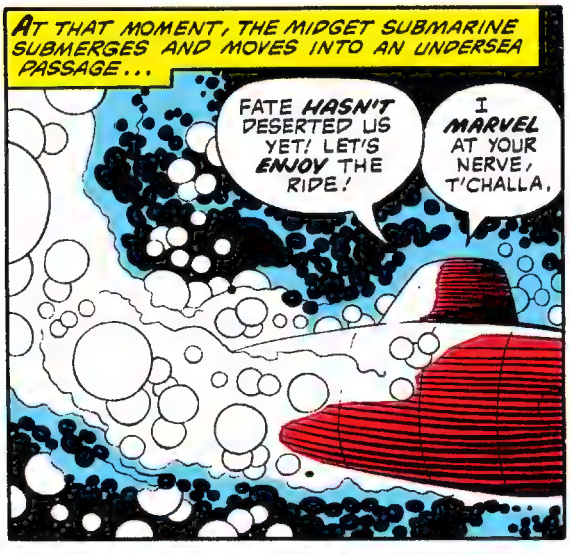
SOON AFTER...
MOVE, OUTSIDERS! SHINZU HAS CHOSEN TO BE MERCIFUL-- NOT POLITE!
HE IS A JUST MAN! THAT IS ENOUGH!
HAH! I'VE GOT A FEW CHOICE THOUGHTS OF MY OWN!

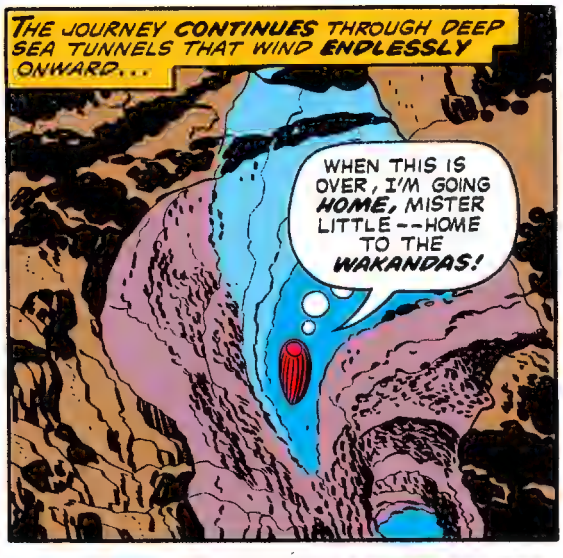

T'CHALLA AND MISTER LITTLE ARE LED THROUGH A MAZE OF CORRIDORS TO A HUGE SUBMARINE PEN...
THESE VESSELS ARE FULLY AUTOMATED--ONE WILL TAKE YOU TO AN AREA BEYOND THIS DOMAIN.
YOU ARE NOT TO BE ABOARD WHEN IT RETURNS TO THIS PLACE!
HAVE NO FEAR OF THAT!

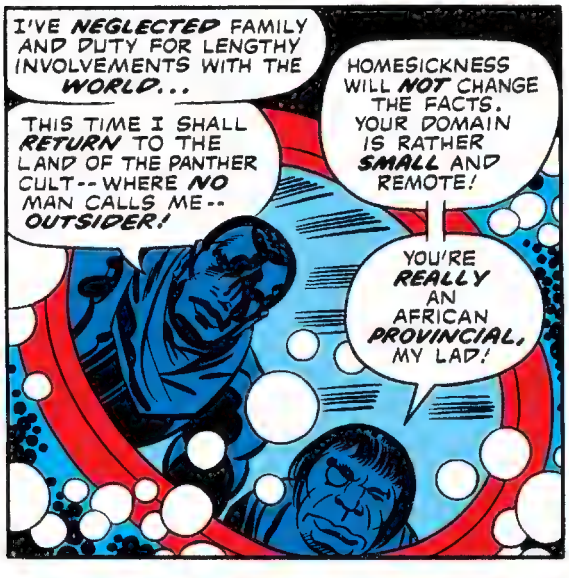

SO... THIS IS HOW THE SAMURAI KEEP IN TOUCH WITH MODERN CULTURES!
IS THAT ALL YOU CAN THINK ABOUT!? IMMORTALITY WAS WITHIN OUR GRASP --AND YOU THREW IT AWAY!

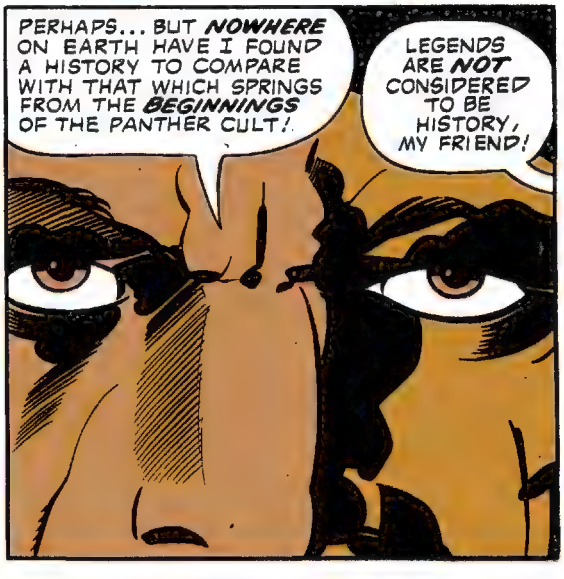

IF YOU CAN'T BE REASONABLE, BE SILENT! I'M JUST GLAD TO BE ALIVE!
YOU'RE NOT A COLLECTOR! YOU DON'T FEEL THE STING OF LOSING SUCH A PRIZE!

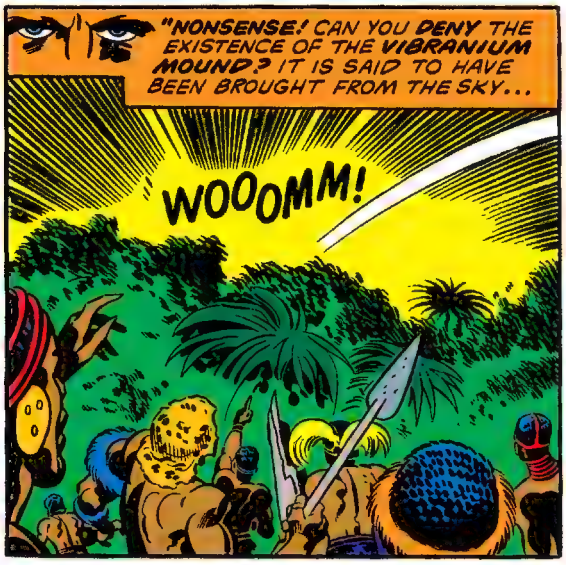
THAT BAND OF JACKALS YOU CALL COLLECTORS DESERVES JAIL INSTEAD OF IMMORTALITY! I'M GLAD OUR MISSION FAILED!
BE CERTAIN THAT WE'LL PAY DEARLY FOR IT!


AT THAT MOMENT, THE MIDGET SUBMARINE SUBMERGES AND MOVES INTO AN UNDERSEA PASSAGE...
FATE HASN'T DESERTED US YET! LET'S ENJOY THE RIDE!
I MARVEL AT YOUR NERVE, T'CHALLA.

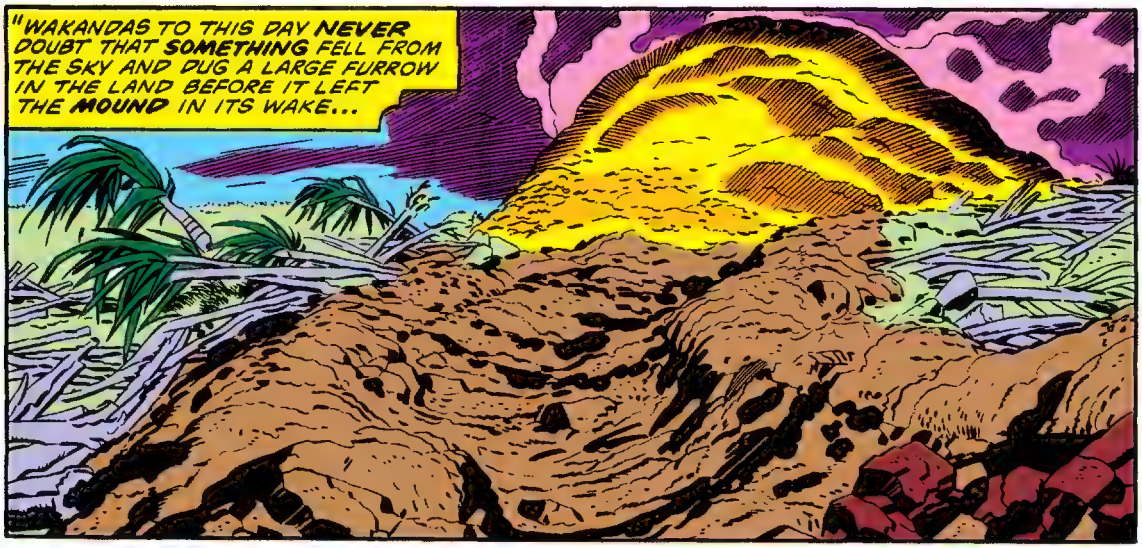

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES THROUGH DEEP SEA TUNNELS THAT WIND ENDLESSLY ONWARD...
WHEN THIS IS OVER, I'M GOING HOME, MISTER LITTLE--HOME TO THE WAKANDAS!


I'VE NEGLECTED FAMILY AND DUTY FOR LENGTHY INVOLVEMENTS WITH THE WORLD...
THIS TIME I SHALL RETURN TO THE LAND OF THE PANTHER CULT--WHERE NO MAN CALLS ME--OUTSIDER!
HOMESICKNESS WILL NOT CHANGE THE FACTS. YOUR DOMAIN IS RATHER SMALL AND REMOTE!
YOU'RE REALLY AN AFRICAN PROVINCIAL, MY LAD!


PERHAPS... BUT NOWHERE ON EARTH HAVE I FOUND A HISTORY TO COMPARE WITH THAT WHICH SPRINGS FROM THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PANTHER CULT!
LEGENDS ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE HISTORY, MY FRIEND!


"NONSENSE! CAN YOU DENY THE EXISTENCE OF THE VIBRANIUM MOUND? IT IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BROUGHT FROM THE SKY...
WOOOMM!

"MY ANCESTORS WERE PEOPLE OF TRUTH! THEY SAW IT HAPPEN AND RECORDED THE EVENT FOR ALL TIME...
A FLASHING STAR HAS FALLEN UPON OUR LAND! IT IS A THING OF GREAT WONDER!
THOUGH IT SHAKES THE GROUND AND FILLS THE AIR WITH SOUNDS OF THUNDER, WE FEAR IT NOT--!


"WAKANDAS TO THIS DAY NEVER DOUBT THAT SOMETHING FELL FROM THE SKY AND DUG A LARGE FURROW IN THE LAND BEFORE IT LEFT THE MOUND IN ITS WAKE...

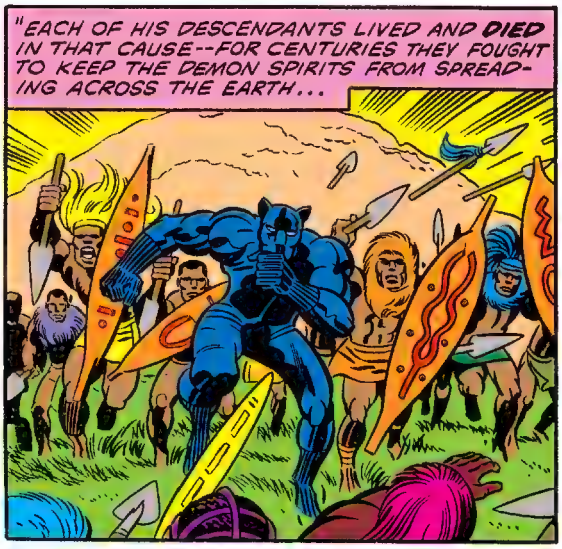
"WHEN THE MOUND HAD COOLED, THE EARLY TRIBESMEN BEGAN TO MINE ITS HIDDEN METAL--WHICH WE NOW CALL VIBRANIUM...
THIS IS A RARE IRON! IT BUZZES WHEN IT'S TOUCHED!
THE STAR SPIRITS HAVE GIVEN THIS TO US--WE MUST ACCEPT IT OR RISK THEIR ANGER!

"THE DEMON STORIES FOLLOWED THAT PERIOD! IT WAS WRITTEN THAT MEN TURNED INTO EVIL SPIRITS AND ATTACKED THEIR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!"

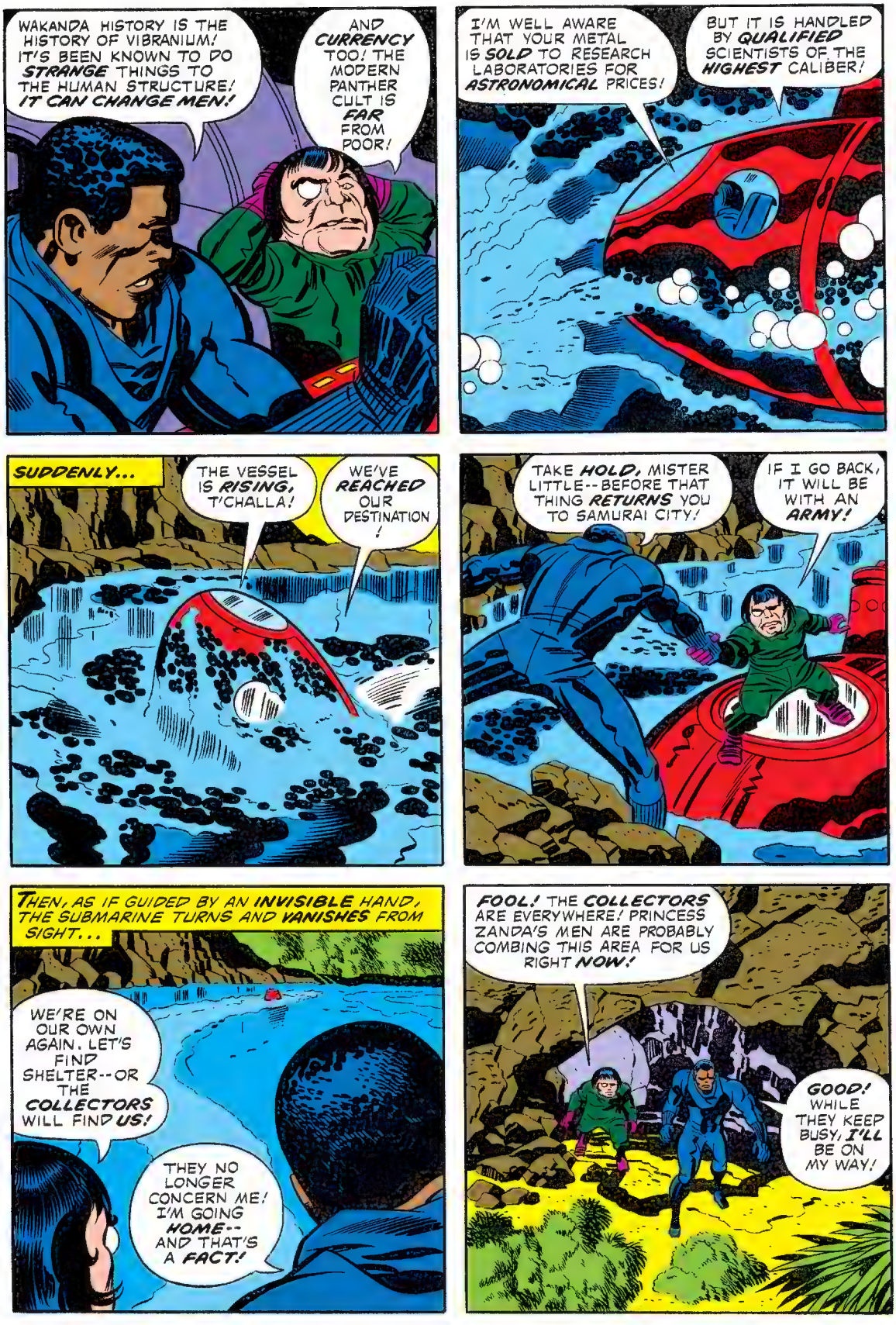
HOME-GROWN PROPAGANDA, DEAR FELLOW! EVERY NATION BREEDS IT TO KEEP ITS PEOPLE UNITED AS WELL AS INTERESTED!
THEN, TELL ME WHY THAT MOUND PRODUCES A METAL FOUND NOWHERE ELSE ON EARTH!

--AND WHERE CAN YOU FIND A PEOPLE WHO WOULD DEDICATE THEIR FUTURE TO KEEP ALL MEN FROM THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF AN ALIEN INFECTION!
AH, YES... WE COME TO THE PROFITABLE VENTURE WHICH YOUR FAMILY CREATED: THE PANTHER CULT!

"BASHENGA WAS THE FIRST BLACK PANTHER. WISE AND FEARLESS, HE CLOSED THE MOUND AND FORMED A CULT THAT WOULD GUARD IT AGAINST ALL INTRUDERS...

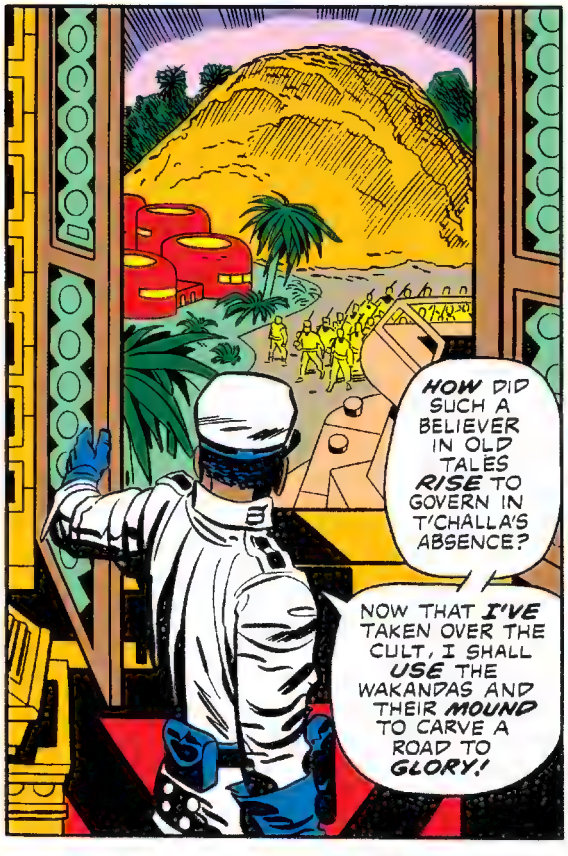

"EACH OF HIS DESCENDANTS LIVED AND DIED IN THAT CAUSE--FOR CENTURIES THEY FOUGHT TO KEEP THE DEMON SPIRITS FROM SPREADING ACROSS THE EARTH...

"IF MY FAMILY PROFITED BY THIS, THEN WHY HAVE THEY NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO DIE IN BED!?"


WAKANDA HISTORY IS THE HISTORY OF VIBRANIUM! IT'S BEEN KNOWN TO DO STRANGE THINGS TO THE HUMAN STRUCTURE! IT CAN CHANGE MEN!
AND CURRENCY TOO! THE MODERN PANTHER CULT IS FAR FROM POOR!
I'M WELL AWARE THAT YOUR METAL IS SOLD TO RESEARCH LABORATORIES FOR ASTRONOMICAL PRICES!
BUT IT IS HANDLED BY QUALIFIED SCIENTISTS OF THE HIGHEST CALIBER!
SUDDENLY...
THE VESSEL IS RISING, T'CHALLA!
WE'VE REACHED OUR DESTINATION!
TAKE HOLD, MISTER LITTLE--BEFORE THAT THING RETURNS YOU TO SAMURAI CITY!
IF I GO BACK, IT WILL BE WITH AN ARMY!
THEN, AS IF GUIDED BY AN INVISIBLE HAND, THE SUBMARINE TURNS AND VANISHES FROM SIGHT...
WE'RE ON OUR OWN AGAIN. LET'S FIND SHELTER--OR THE COLLECTORS WILL FIND US!
THEY NO LONGER CONCERN ME! I'M GOING HOME-- AND THAT'S A FACT!
FOOL! THE COLLECTORS ARE EVERYWHERE! PRINCESS ZANDA'S MEN ARE PROBABLY COMBING THIS AREA FOR US RIGHT NOW!
GOOD! WHILE THEY KEEP BUSY, I'LL BE ON MY WAY!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE HEART OF T'CHALLA'S DOMAIN...
THIS LAND IS NOW MINE! THE MOUND IS MINE! SEE THE PROOF OF IT, N'GASSI!
JAKARRA! YOU'VE EXPOSED YOURSELF TO RAW VIBRANIUM!

I DARED TO EXPERIMENT, OLD ONE! ONLY LESSER MEN WOULD SHRINK FROM THIS SOURCE OF PHYSICAL POWER!
THE TERROR LEGENDS DON'T FRIGHTEN ME! THAT'S WHY I SHALL BECOME A GIANT TO BE FEARED!
YOU FOOL! YOUR JEALOUSY OF T'CHALLA HAS DESTROYED YOU!


HOW DID SUCH A BELIEVER IN OLD TALES RISE TO GOVERN IN T'CHALLA'S ABSENCE?
NOW THAT I'VE TAKEN OVER THE CULT, I SHALL USE THE WAKANDAS AND THEIR MOUND TO CARVE A ROAD TO GLORY!

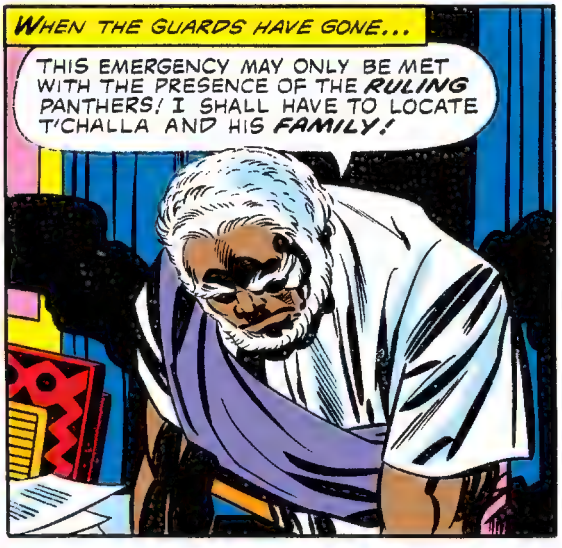
LOOK WELL, YOU FOUNTAIN OF IGNORANCE! THE VIBRANIUM EFFECT IS GONE!
IT FLARES UP IN GENTLE PERIODS, SLOWLY CREATING THE POWERS OF A COLOSSUS!
YOURS IS THE SICKNESS OF THE SMALL--! THOSE WHO BROOD IN THEIR BROTHER'S SHADOW--UNTIL THEY EXPLODE WITH HATRED!

CURSED BE THE DAY THAT T'CHALLA'S FATHER TOOK A SECOND WIFE!
CURSED BE JAKARRA! --THE CHILD OF THAT SECOND UNION!
YOU'LL REGRET THAT SLUR, N'GASSI!
T'CHALLA HIMSELF, AND ALL THOSE WHO MADE SPORT OF ME SHALL JOIN THE LIST OF THOSE I PLAN TO PUNISH!
THEN START NOW! YOU HAVE LITTLE TIME LEFT!
THE FLARE IS RETURNING! --THIS TIME TO FINISH ITS SINISTER WORK!
Y-YOU LIE!
I NEVER LIE-- NOR DO THE OLD TALES LIE! THE LEGENDS ARE BASED ON FACT!
YOU HAVE UNLEASHED ONCE MORE THE TERROR THAT WAS SEEN IN ANCIENT DAYS!
THIS MAY NOT KILL YOU, JAKARRA, BUT BY THE GREAT PANTHER, YOU WILL WISH FOR DEATH WHEN IT IS DONE!
HELP ME, N'GASSI!
HELP ME!
I-I'M-- CHANGING!

LIKE A MADDENED ANIMAL, JAKARRA RUSHES FROM THE ROOM...
LET ME GO! THERE'S WORK TO DO!

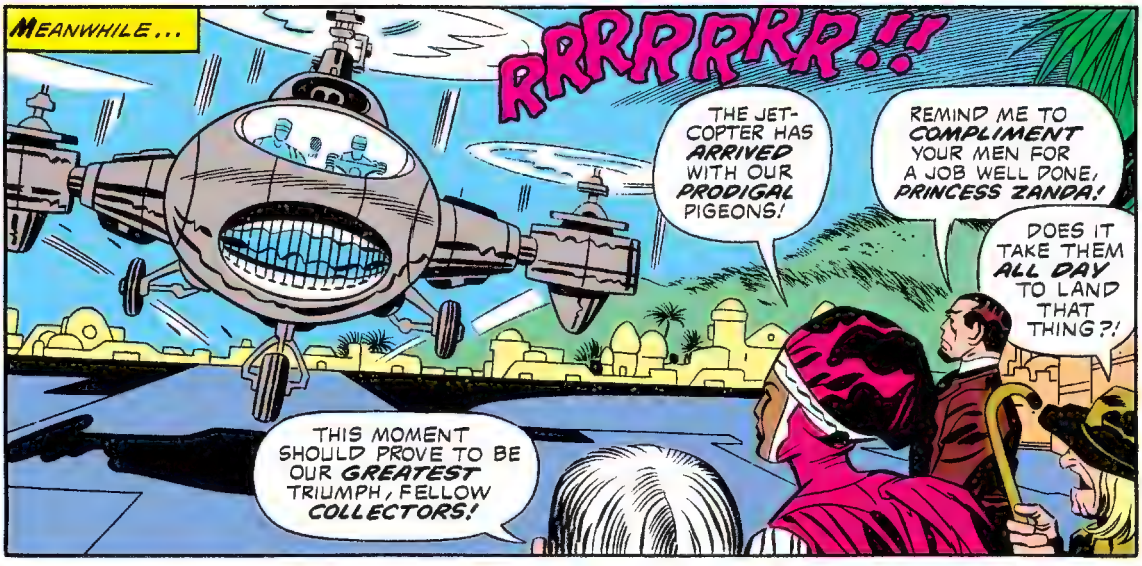
FORGIVE US, N'GASSI--WE FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS, NOW!
THE PEOPLE MUST BE WARNED TO AVOID ALL CONTACT WITH JAKARRA! HE'S THE CARRIER OF A GRAVE INFECTION!

SOUND THE TRADITIONAL DRUMS! ALERT ALL TRIBES IN THE TERRITORY TO THE DANGER OF CONTAMINATION!


WHEN THE GUARDS HAVE GONE...
THIS EMERGENCY MAY ONLY BE MET WITH THE PRESENCE OF THE RULING PANTHERS! I SHALL HAVE TO LOCATE T'CHALLA AND HIS FAMILY!

SUDDENLY...
BOOMBOOMBOOM
BOOM

AFTER CENTURIES OF SILENCE, THE DRUMS OF THE WAKANDA SEND THE THROBBING MESSAGE OF ALARM!
BOOMBOOM


MEANWHILE...
RRRRRRR!!
THE JET-COPTER HAS ARRIVED WITH OUR PRODIGAL PIGEONS!
REMIND ME TO COMPLIMENT YOUR MEN FOR A JOB WELL DONE, PRINCESS ZANDA!
DOES IT TAKE THEM ALL DAY TO LAND THAT THING?!
THIS MOMENT SHOULD PROVE TO BE OUR GREATEST TRIUMPH, FELLOW COLLECTORS!

I UNDERSTAND THE BLACK PANTHER WAS TAKEN WITHOUT A STRUGGLE?
HE HAS A SILLY FONDNESS FOR MISTER LITTLE-- WHEN MY MEN THREATENED TO BLOW UP THE FLEA WITH A GRENADE, THE PANTHER CAPITULATED!
HERE THEY COME!

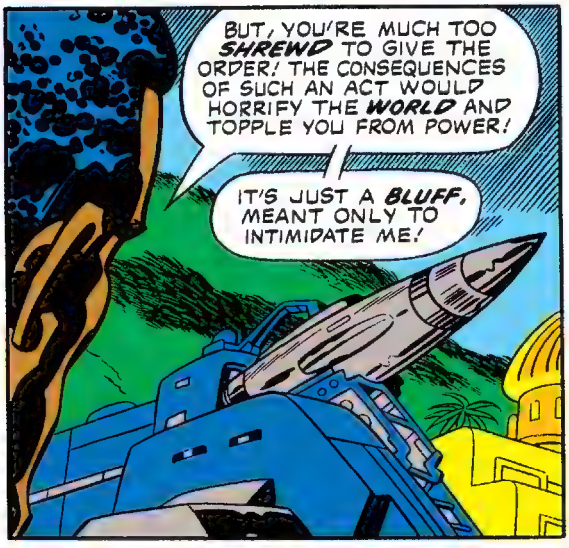
WELCOME BACK, HEROES.
LET'S NOT WASTE TIME!
WHERE IS IT? WHERE IS THE MIRACLE WATER?

DON'T STAND THERE GAPING AT US! SPEAK--!!
ER--WELL, YOU SEE, IT'S ALL RATHER DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN--
WE DON'T HAVE THE MIRACLE WATER! I RETURNED IT TO THE SAMURAI IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR LIVES!

WHAT!?
DO YOU EXPECT US TO BUY SUCH FLIM-FLAM!?
WHERE IS IT, T'CHALLA? WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH IT!?
SLAP!
BUT-- HE TOLD YOU THE TRUTH!

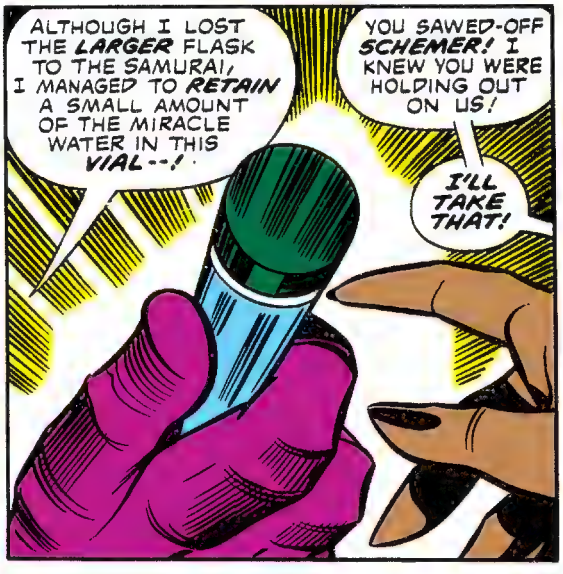
YOU COLLECTORS ARE SO DEVIOUS THAT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THE TRUTH IF YOU HEARD IT!
DON'T TEST MY PATIENCE, PANTHER!
MAKE HIM TALK, ZANDA!

I GAVE YOU FULL WARNING OF WHAT WOULD BEFALL YOUR PRECIOUS WAKANDAS IF YOU FAILED ME!
LOOK--!
YES, I SEE IT-- THE MISSILE STILL WAITS ON ITS LAUNCHING PAD-- READY TO BE FIRED!

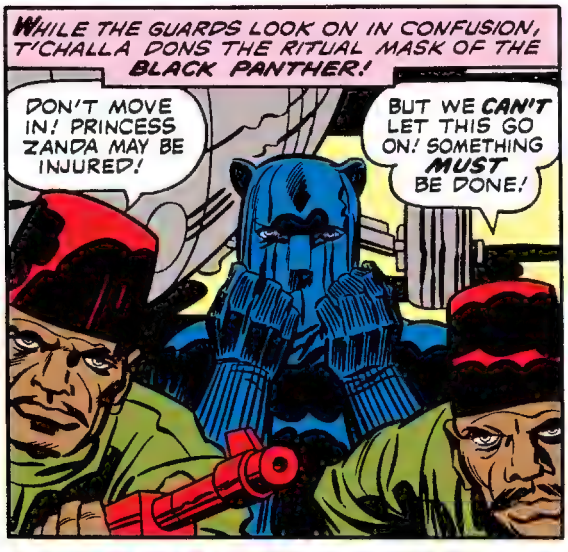

BUT, YOU'RE MUCH TOO SHREWD TO GIVE THE ORDER! THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH AN ACT WOULD HORRIFY THE WORLD AND TOPPLE YOU FROM POWER!
IT'S JUST A BLUFF, MEANT ONLY TO INTIMIDATE ME!

THE WORLD WON'T MOURN HIS PASSING! IF HE DOESN'T TALK-- HAVE HIM SHOT!
NO! THEN THE SECRET WOULD DIE WITH HIM! THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO LOOSEN THE TONGUE!
USE ANY MEANS AT HAND! THE MIRACLE WATER MUST BE OURS!

YOU'VE HEARD THE VERDICT-- WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER?
NOW, THERE'S NO NEED TO BE CARRIED AWAY IN THE HEAT OF ANGER! YOU FORGET THAT MISTER LITTLE ANTICIPATES EVERY POSSIBLE EMERGENCY.
WHAT IS THAT DEVIL HIDING IN HIS POCKET?


ALTHOUGH I LOST THE LARGER FLASK TO THE SAMURAI, I MANAGED TO RETAIN A SMALL AMOUNT OF THE MIRACLE WATER IN THIS VIAL--!
YOU SAWED-OFF SCHEMER! I KNEW YOU WERE HOLDING OUT ON US!
I'LL TAKE THAT!

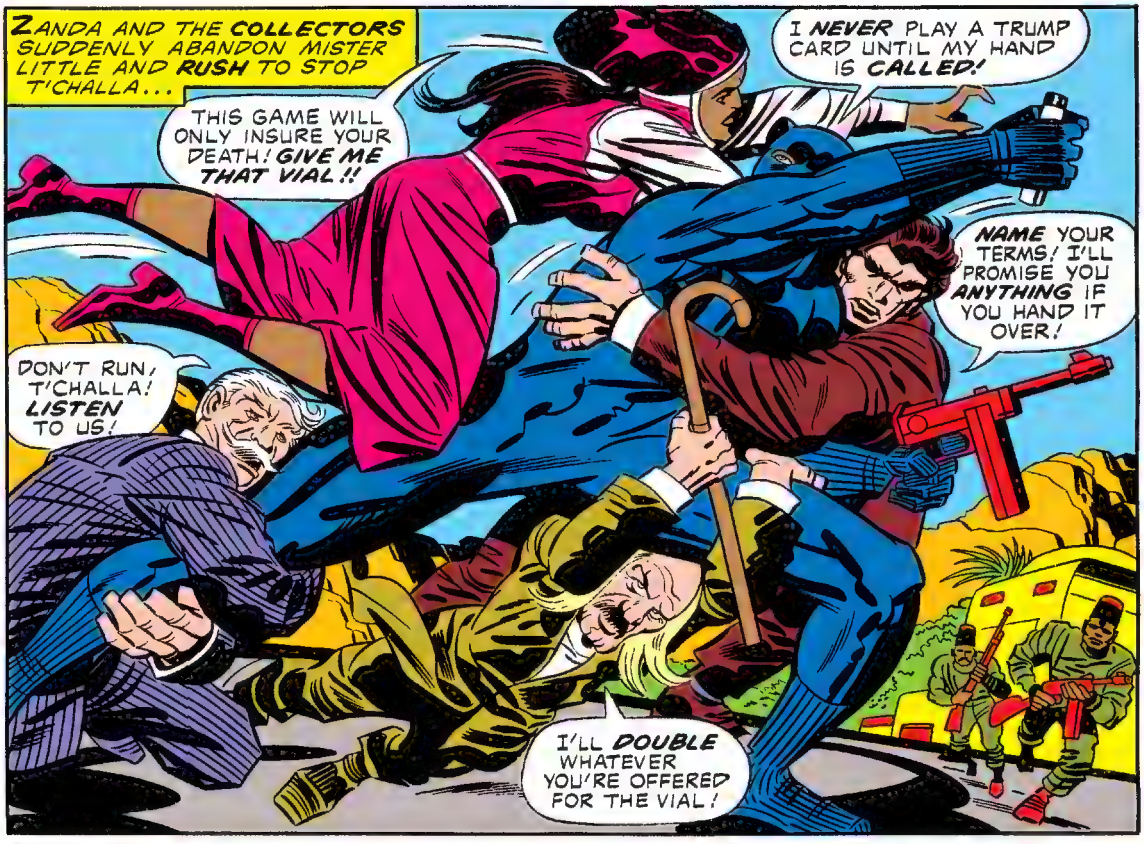
NO, ZANDA! I'M THE OLDEST HERE! THE FIRST DROP OF IMMORTALITY SHOULD BE MINE-- MINE!
STOP IT! GET BACK! HAVE YOU ALL GONE MAD?
THEY'RE LIKE-- ANIMALS!
I'LL TAKE MY SHARE OF IT BEFORE YOU GREEDY FOOLS DRINK IT ALL!
DON'T CRUSH HIM-- YOU'LL BREAK THE VIAL!


WHILE THE GUARDS LOOK ON IN CONFUSION, T'CHALLA DONS THE RITUAL MASK OF THE BLACK PANTHER!
DON'T MOVE IN! PRINCESS ZANDA MAY BE INJURED!
BUT WE CAN'T LET THIS GO ON! SOMETHING MUST BE DONE!

KRAK!
POW!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOUR PROBLEM, MEN!

WHAT IN BLAZES!?
YOU CAN HANDLE THIS ONE, TOO! TAKE THE VIAL!

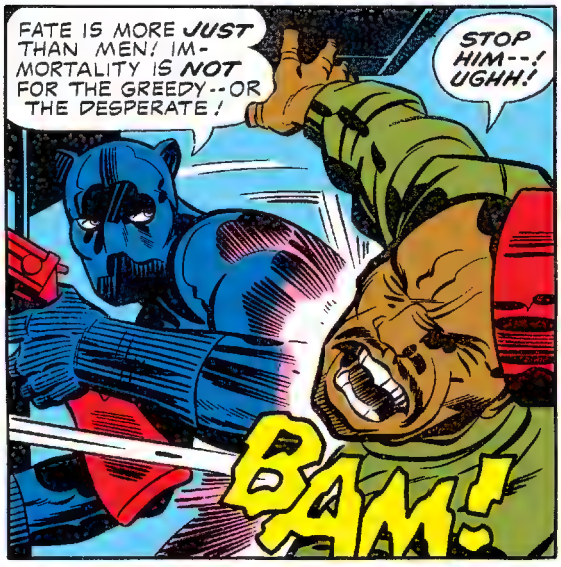
START RUNNING, PANTHER! IT'S YOU THEY'LL BE AFTER, NOW!
SEND ME A POST CARD WHEN YOU REACH HOME!

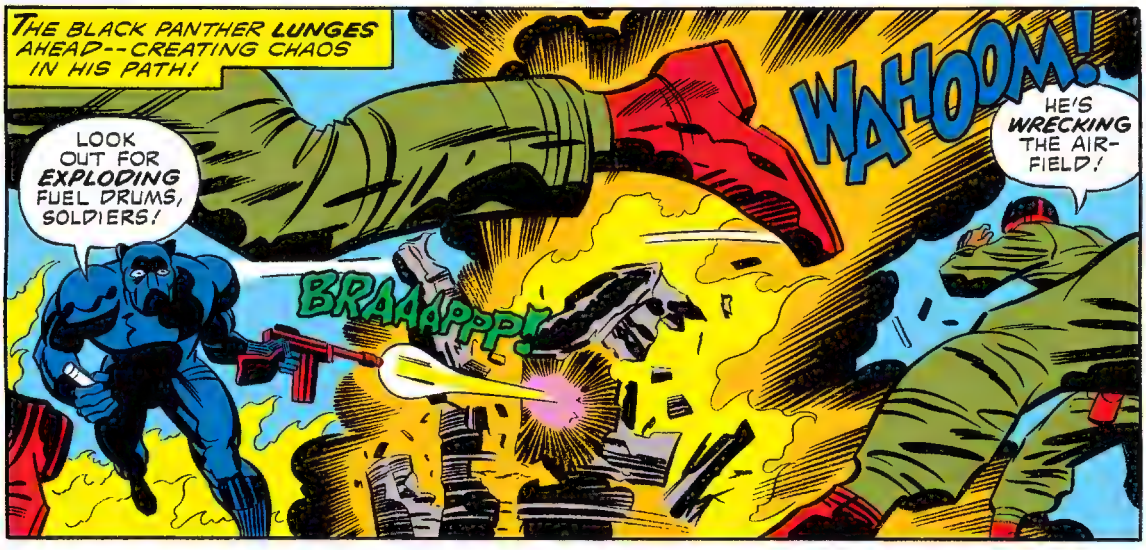

ZANDA AND THE COLLECTORS SUDDENLY ABANDON MISTER LITTLE AND RUSH TO STOP T'CHALLA...
THIS GAME WILL ONLY INSURE YOUR DEATH! GIVE ME THAT VIAL!!
I NEVER PLAY A TRUMP CARD UNTIL MY HAND IS CALLED!
NAME YOUR TERMS! I'LL PROMISE YOU ANYTHING IF YOU HAND IT OVER!
DON'T RUN, T'CHALLA! LISTEN TO US!
I'LL DOUBLE WHATEVER YOU'RE OFFERED FOR THE VIAL!

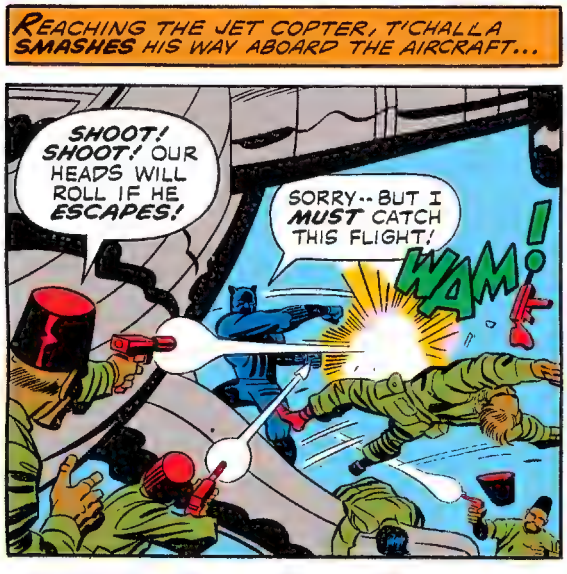
BEGONE!

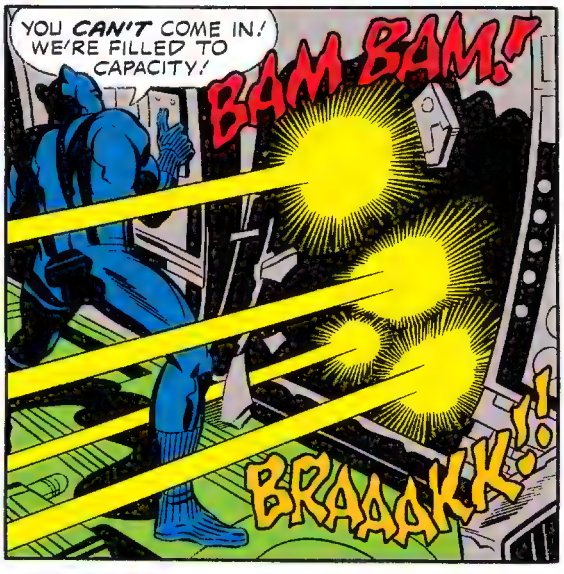
THE SIGHT OF PRINCESS ZANDA BEING RUDELY FLUNG ASIDE STIRS HER GUARDS TO ACTION!
HE'S INJURED THE PRINCESS!! SHOOT THE DOG IN HIS TRACKS!
FIRE--! FIRE!!

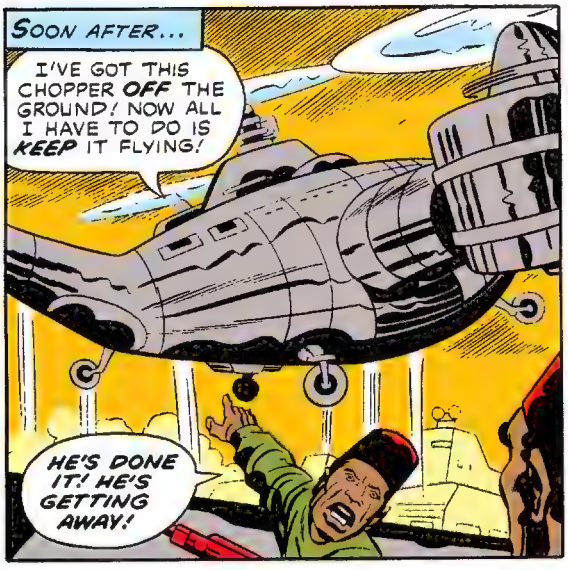
KRAK!
THAT SHOT BROKE THE VIAL!
ZOK!


FATE IS MORE JUST THAN MEN! IMMORTALITY IS NOT FOR THE GREEDY--OR THE DESPERATE!
STOP HIM--! UGHH!
BAM!

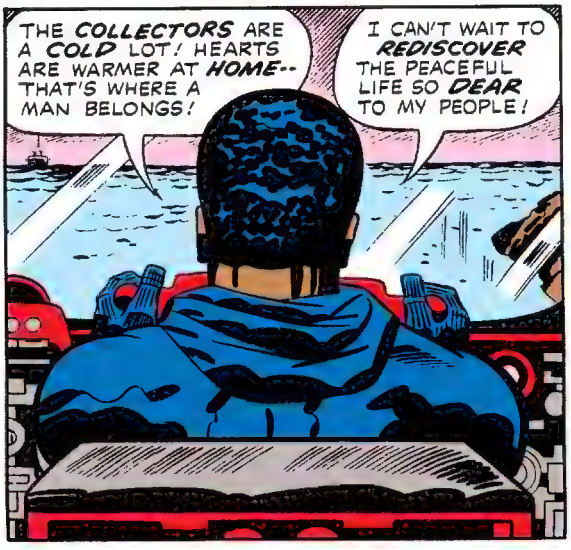

THE BLACK PANTHER LUNGES AHEAD--CREATING CHAOS IN HIS PATH!
LOOK OUT FOR EXPLODING FUEL DRUMS, SOLDIERS!
WAHOOM!
HE'S WRECKING THE AIRFIELD!
BRAAAPPP!


REACHING THE JET COPTER, T'CHALLA SMASHES HIS WAY ABOARD THE AIRCRAFT...
SHOOT! SHOOT! OUR HEADS WILL ROLL IF HE ESCAPES!
SORRY--BUT I MUST CATCH THIS FLIGHT!
WAM!


YOU CAN'T COME IN! WE'RE FILLED TO CAPACITY!
BAM BAM!
BRAAAKK!


SOON AFTER...
I'VE GOT THIS CHOPPER OFF THE GROUND! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS KEEP IT FLYING!
HE'S DONE IT! HE'S GETTING AWAY!

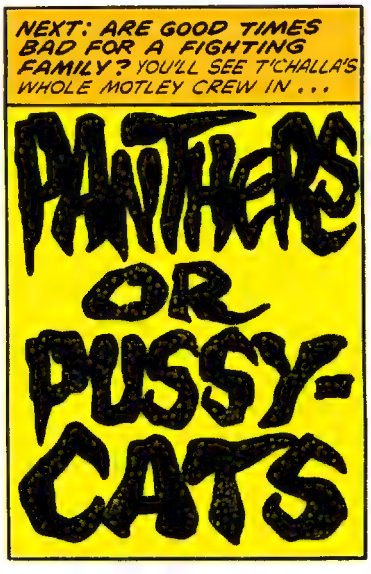
MY GUESS IS THAT ZANDA WON'T WASTE ANY MISSILES TO BRING ME DOWN! NOW THAT THE MIRACLE WATER IS GONE I'M NO LONGER OF INTEREST TO HER!


THE COLLECTORS ARE A COLD LOT! HEARTS ARE WARMER AT HOME-- THAT'S WHERE A MAN BELONGS!
I CAN'T WAIT TO REDISCOVER THE PEACEFUL LIFE SO DEAR TO MY PEOPLE!

AT THAT MOMENT...
ONE OF THE RULING PANTHERS HAS COME, N'GASSI--
GOOD! WE'LL NEED A STRONG HAND AT THE HELM UNTIL T'CHALLA RETURNS!

I WAS ON MEDICAL DUTY IN A NEARBY VILLAGE WHEN I HEARD THE DRUMS! IT SEEMS THAT TERROR HAS COME AMONG US!
ER--THAT IS SO-- BUT--

PERHAPS IT IS BEST TO WAIT UNTIL THE REST OF THE FAMILY ARRIVES--
JOSHUA ITOBO IS YOUNG, BUT HE IS READY TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE!


NEXT: ARE GOOD TIMES BAD FOR A FIGHTING FAMILY? YOU'LL SEE T'CHALLA'S WHOLE MOTLEY CREW IN . . .
PANTHERS OR PUSSY-CATS

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ALL-OUT ACTION WITH THE AWESOME
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WAY OF THE WARRIOR!
THIS ISSUE--MEET T'CHALLA'S FAMILY! THEY MUST REGAIN THEIR FIGHTING HERITAGE--OR FALL BEFORE AN INHUMAN FOE!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • INKED AND LETTERED BY **MIKE ROYER** • COLORS BY **GLYNIS WEIN** • CONSULTING EDITOR **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

TRADITION CALLS THE RULING FAMILY OF THE CULT TO DUTY... BUT, IT IS WORK FOR WARRIORS... COMBAT IN THE ARENA OF LIFE AND DEATH! CAN THE MODERN LIFE-STYLE OF T'CHALLA'S RELATIVES QUALIFY THEM FOR THIS TERRIBLE TASK? JUDGE THEM FOR YOURSELVES! ARE THEY...
PANTHERS OR PUSSYCATS?
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
ZOK!
I'M NOT THROUGH YET-- UGH!
THE RULING PANTHER HOLDS HIS GROUND! THE CHALLENGE TO HIS TITLE IS FAILING!

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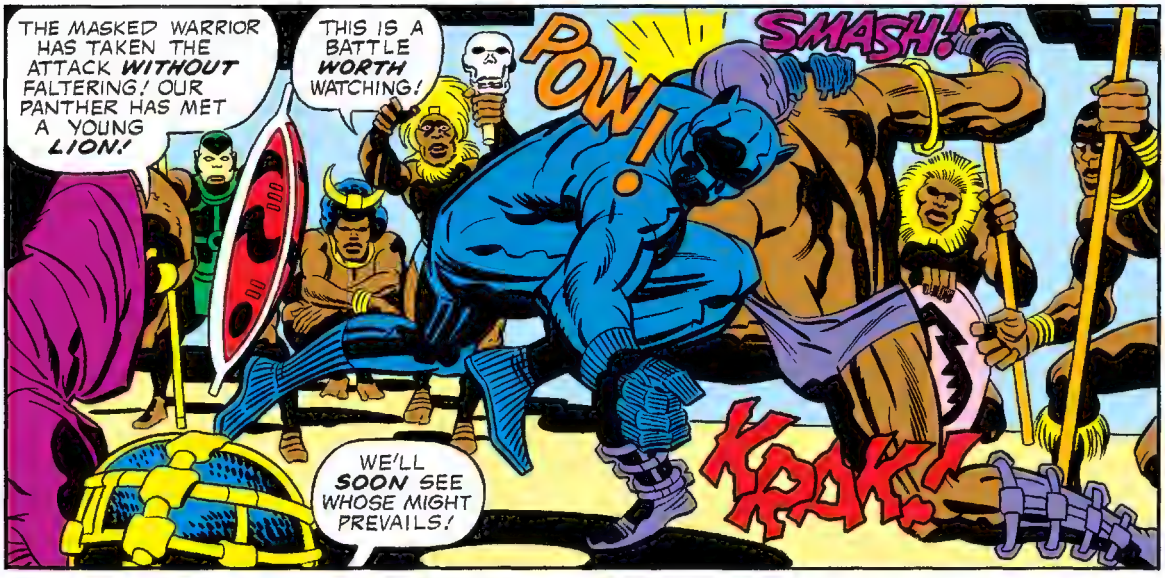
THE COMBAT RITUAL WAS **SACRED** TO THE BLACK PANTHER CULT. IT INSURED THE FACT THAT THE **MIGHTIEST** WARRIOR OF THE ROYAL CLAN WOULD CONTINUE TO GOVERN THE PEOPLE KNOWN AS THE WAKANDANS IT WAS THIS EVENT THAT BECAME THE HIGH POINT IN THE LIFE OF T'CHALLA.

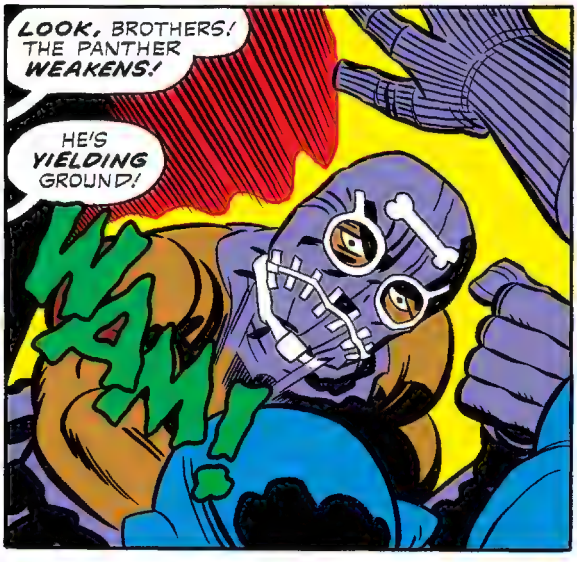
COME BACK AND FIGHT! YOU STRUCK ME DOWN... BUT I'M **STILL** UNDEFEATED—!

YOU BAYING **JACKALS** HAVE HAD YOUR TURN! I CHOOSE THIS MASKED WARRIOR FOR MY **FINAL** BOUT!

I DEMAND **ANOTHER** CHANCE!

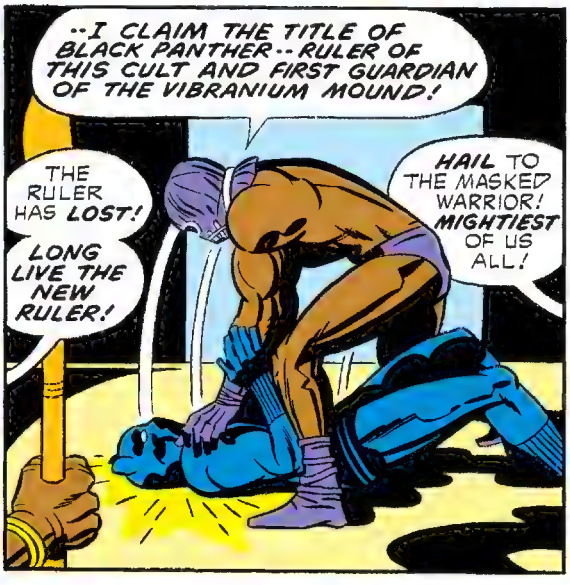
COME, THEN! UNSHEATH YOUR CLAWS AND SHOW YOUR STRENGTH! I'VE WAITED MANY YEARS FOR THIS MOMENT!

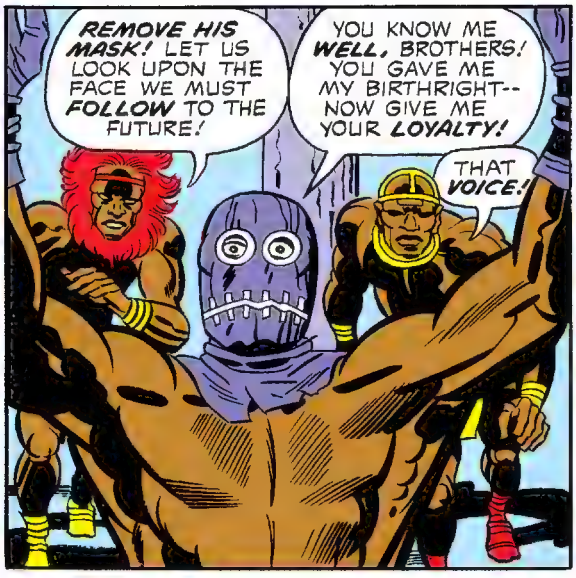

THE MASKED WARRIOR HAS TAKEN THE ATTACK WITHOUT FALTERING! OUR PANTHER HAS MET A YOUNG LION!
THIS IS A BATTLE WORTH WATCHING!
POW!
SMASH!
WE'LL SOON SEE WHOSE MIGHT PREVAILS!
KRAK!


LOOK, BROTHERS! THE PANTHER WEAKENS!
HE'S YIELDING GROUND!
WAM!

WE MAY BE WITNESSING THE END OF AN ERA -- AND THE COMING OF A NEW ONE!
IT IS SAD WHEN THE OLD ONES FAIL!
SILENCE! THIS IS THE MOMENT!

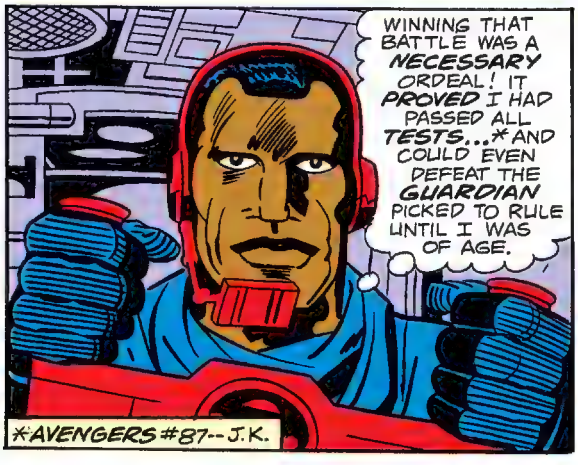
THEN, AS THE ONLOOKERS GASP IN ASTONISH-MENT...
WHEN HE LOWERS HIM TO THE GROUND-- IT WILL BE OVER!
BY THE RITES OF BATTLE-- BY THE HONOR CODE OF THE WAKANDA--

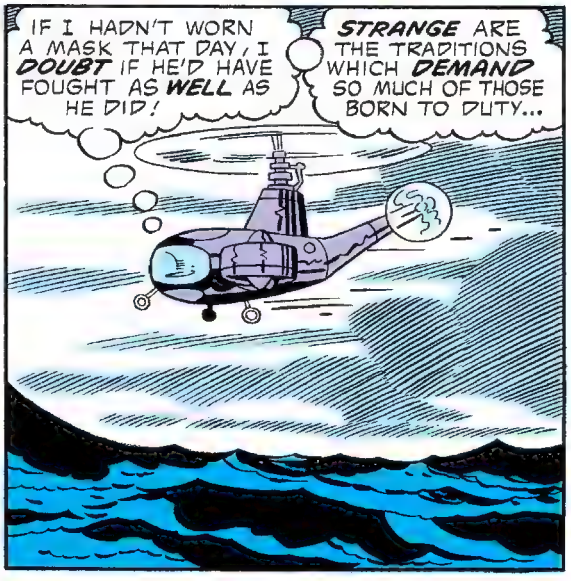

--I CLAIM THE TITLE OF BLACK PANTHER--RULER OF THIS CULT AND FIRST GUARDIAN OF THE VIBRANIUM MOUND!
THE RULER HAS LOST!
LONG LIVE THE NEW RULER!
HAIL TO THE MASKED WARRIOR! MIGHTIEST OF US ALL!


REMOVE HIS MASK! LET US LOOK UPON THE FACE WE MUST FOLLOW TO THE FUTURE!
YOU KNOW ME WELL, BROTHERS! YOU GAVE ME MY BIRTHRIGHT--NOW GIVE ME YOUR LOYALTY!
THAT VOICE!

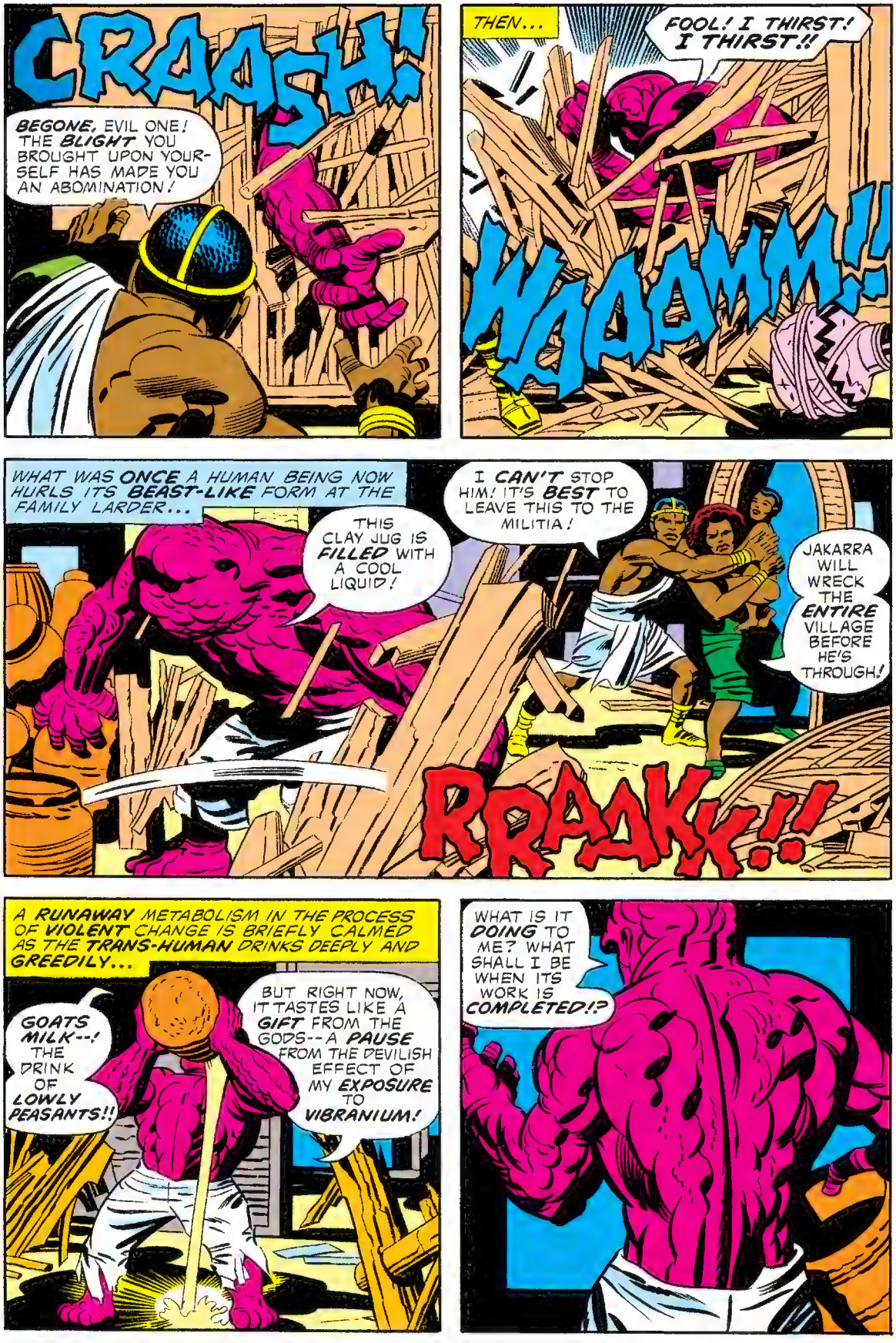
THERE ARE FEW AMONG US WITH SUCH A COMMANDING VOICE--!
IT IS TRUE! WE KNOW WHO YOU ARE!
WHO BUT THE SON OF OUR LONG-SLAIN CHIEFTAIN* COULD DEFEAT OUR PRESENT CHAMPION AND REGENT?!
*SEE FANTASTIC FOUR #53--JACK.

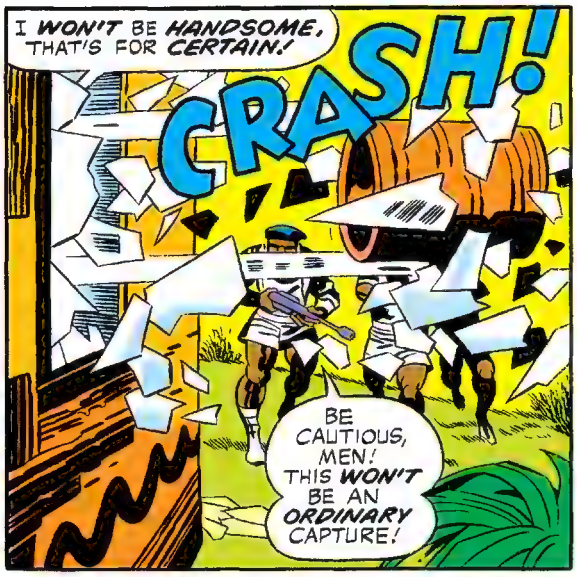
IT WAS A NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN SCENE... DREDGED UP FROM THE HEART OF A MAN WHO HAS WANDERED FAR FROM HIS BEGINNINGS... AND IS NOW RETURNING HOME...


WINNING THAT BATTLE WAS A NECESSARY ORDEAL! IT PROVED I HAD PASSED ALL TESTS...* AND COULD EVEN DEFEAT THE GUARDIAN PICKED TO RULE UNTIL I WAS OF AGE.
*AVENGERS #87--J.K.

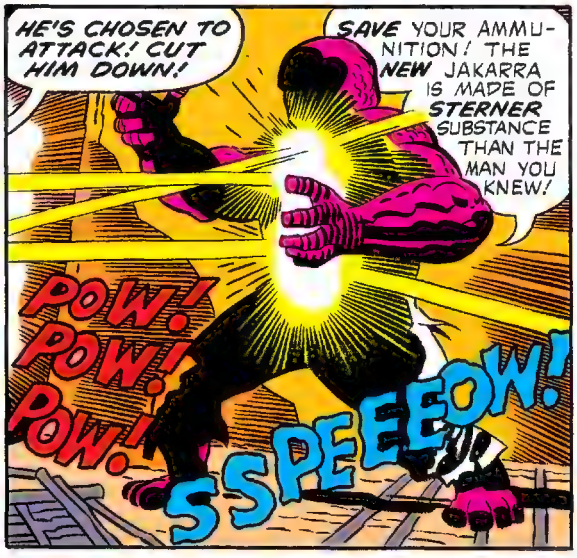

IF I HADN'T WORN A MASK THAT DAY, I DOUBT IF HE'D HAVE FOUGHT AS WELL AS HE DID!
STRANGE ARE THE TRADITIONS WHICH DEMAND SO MUCH OF THOSE BORN TO DUTY...

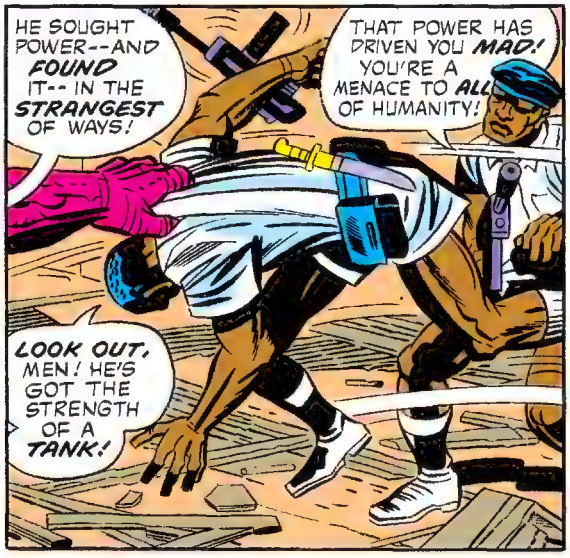
IT SEEMS LIKE DECADES HAVE PASSED SINCE I LEFT THE WAKANDAS FOR OBLIGATIONS ELSEWHERE. I'VE PRACTICALLY BEEN LIVING ANOTHER LIFE!
THERE IS MORE TO DO THAN RECAPTURE OLD MEMORIES! I MUST SEE AND TOUCH AND WORK WITH MY PEOPLE ONCE AGAIN!
WHAT'S THAT!? SOMETHING'S AFLOAT IN THE SEA BELOW!
TWO MEN IN A RAFT! I'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO PICK THEM UP--!
COUNT ON THE UNEXPECTED TO ERECT A ROADBLOCK WHEN YOU'RE HURRYING HOME!
MEANWHILE, AMONG THE WAKANDAS, A GRAVE MENACE HAS ARISEN...
TAKE THE BOY TO SAFETY!
DO AS I SAY --QUICKLY!!
NO! A WAKANDAN DOES NOT FLEE!
BAM! BAM!
KKRAAK!
THAT THING WILL BE UPON US IN SECONDS, WIFE! GO! GO!
WAM!
DEMONS TAKE THE LAW THAT ISSUES GUNS ONLY TO THE MILITIA!
BUT-- WHO COULD FORETELL THE CURSE OF JAKARRA?
ANGER ME AND DIE, STUPID ONE!


CRAASH!
BEGONE, EVIL ONE! THE BLIGHT YOU BROUGHT UPON YOURSELF HAS MADE YOU AN ABOMINATION!
THEN...
FOOL! I THIRST! I THIRST!!
WAAAMM!!
WHAT WAS ONCE A HUMAN BEING NOW HURLS ITS BEAST-LIKE FORM AT THE FAMILY LARDER...
THIS CLAY JUG IS FILLED WITH A COOL LIQUID!
I CAN'T STOP HIM! IT'S BEST TO LEAVE THIS TO THE MILITIA!
JAKARRA WILL WRECK THE ENTIRE VILLAGE BEFORE HE'S THROUGH!
RRAAKK!!
A RUNAWAY METABOLISM IN THE PROCESS OF VIOLENT CHANGE IS BRIEFLY CALMED AS THE TRANS-HUMAN DRINKS DEEPLY AND GREEDILY...
GOATS MILK--! THE DRINK OF LOWLY PEASANTS!!
BUT RIGHT NOW, IT TASTES LIKE A GIFT FROM THE GODS--A PAUSE FROM THE DEVILISH EFFECT OF MY EXPOSURE TO VIBRANIUM!
WHAT IS IT DOING TO ME? WHAT SHALL I BE WHEN ITS WORK IS COMPLETED!?

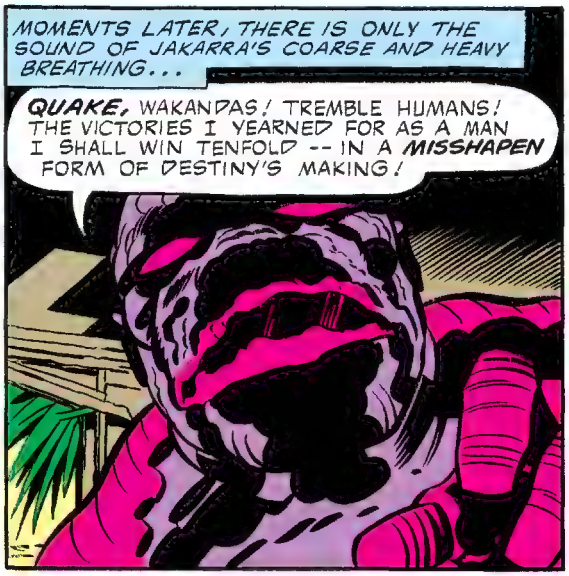

I WON'T BE HANDSOME, THAT'S FOR CERTAIN!
CRASH!
BE CAUTIOUS, MEN! THIS WON'T BE AN ORDINARY CAPTURE!

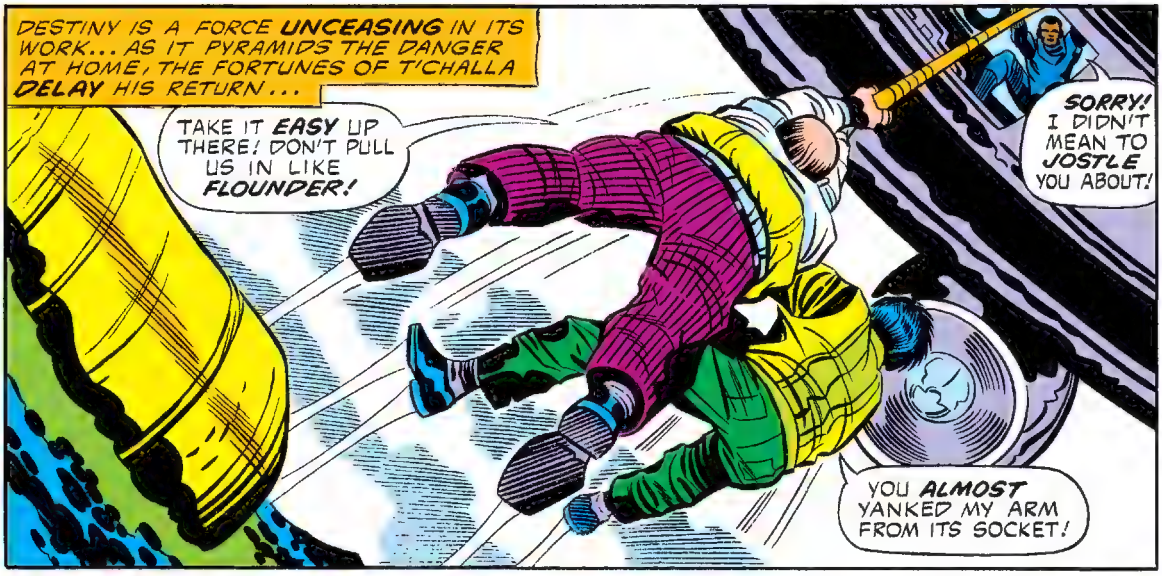
A MOMENT LATER...
MILITIA! SO, YOU'VE COME FOR ME, EH?
DON'T RESIST, JAKARRA! YOU'VE GOT TO BE CONFINED!
IF YOU PUT UP A FIGHT-- WE'LL OPEN FIRE!


HE'S CHOSEN TO ATTACK! CUT HIM DOWN!
SAVE YOUR AMMUNITION! THE NEW JAKARRA IS MADE OF STERNER SUBSTANCE THAN THE MAN YOU KNEW!
POW! POW! POW!
SSPEEEOW!


HE SOUGHT POWER--AND FOUND IT-- IN THE STRANGEST OF WAYS!
THAT POWER HAS DRIVEN YOU MAD! YOU'RE A MENACE TO ALL OF HUMANITY!
LOOK OUT, MEN! HE'S GOT THE STRENGTH OF A TANK!

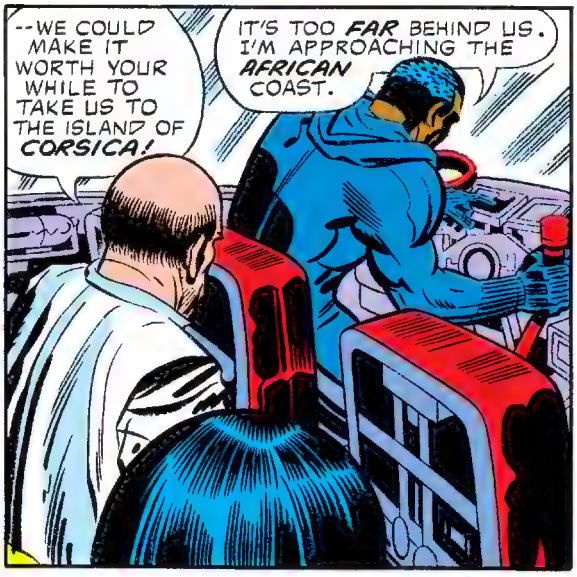
WAK!
POW
BAM
I'LL TEACH YOU DOGS WHO IS IN COMMAND HERE!


MOMENTS LATER, THERE IS ONLY THE SOUND OF JAKARRA'S COARSE AND HEAVY BREATHING...
QUAKE, WAKANDAS! TREMBLE HUMANS! THE VICTORIES I YEARNED FOR AS A MAN I SHALL WIN TENFOLD -- IN A MISSHAPEN FORM OF DESTINY'S MAKING!

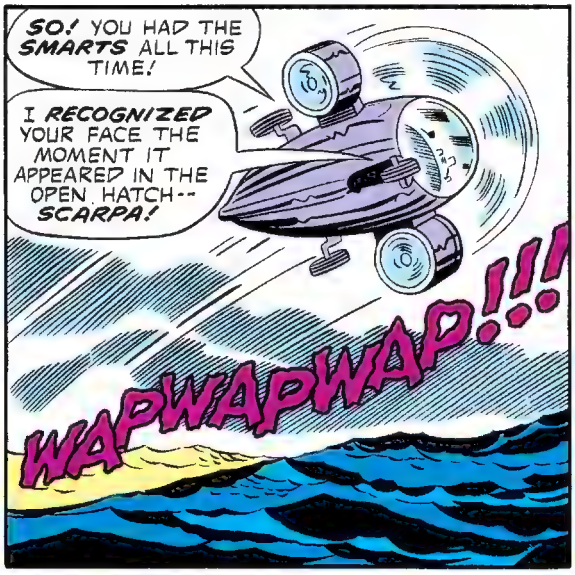

DESTINY IS A FORCE UNCEASING IN ITS WORK... AS IT PYRAMIDS THE DANGER AT HOME, THE FORTUNES OF T'CHALLA DELAY HIS RETURN...
TAKE IT EASY UP THERE! DON'T PULL US IN LIKE FLOUNDER!
SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO JOSTLE YOU ABOUT!
YOU ALMOST YANKED MY ARM FROM ITS SOCKET!

THIS IS A BIG CHOPPER YOU'VE GOT, MISTER... LONG RANGE STUFF, EH?
FORTUNATELY FOR YOU, IT WAS TRAVELLING THIS ROUTE!
DON'T BUG THE GUY, HERMAN. HE JUST SAVED OUR LIVES!

NO THANKS NEEDED. I'LL DROP YOU TWO OFF AT THE NEAREST PORT AND RESUME MY JOURNEY.
WHERE EXACTLY IS THE NEAREST PORT?
ER... WHAT HERMAN MEANS IS--

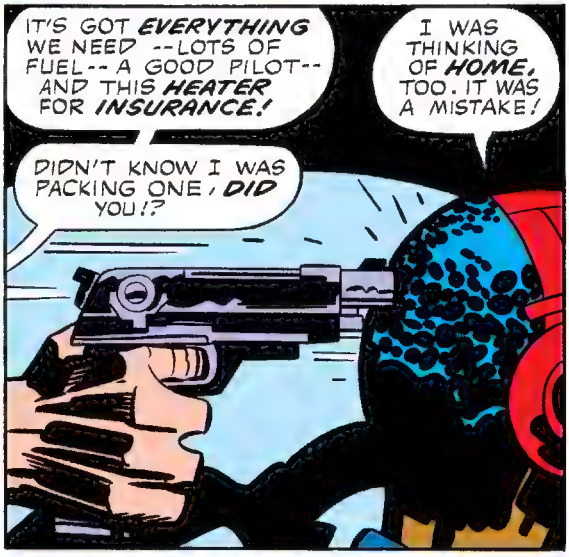

--WE COULD MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO TAKE US TO THE ISLAND OF CORSICA!
IT'S TOO FAR BEHIND US. I'M APPROACHING THE AFRICAN COAST.

WE'RE NOT JUST STRAYS, MISTER. SPEAKING FOR MYSELF, I CAN TELL YOU THAT I'M A CELEBRITY OF SORTS--THE PRESIDENT OF A LARGE CORPORATION, YOU MIGHT SAY!
I KNOW ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION... IT'S LED BY A GODFATHER --NOT A PRESIDENT!

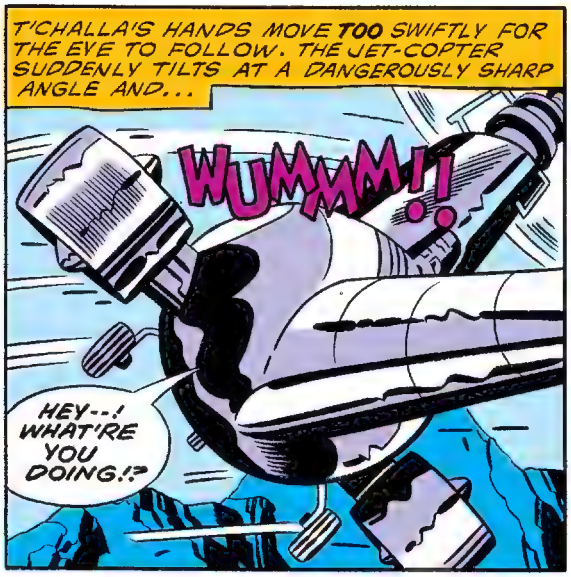

SO! YOU HAD THE SMARTS ALL THIS TIME!
I RECOGNIZED YOUR FACE THE MOMENT IT APPEARED IN THE OPEN HATCH--SCARPA!
WAPWAPWAP!!!

OKAY... SO YOU READ THE HEADLINES AND WATCH T.V.
YOU SOUND LIKE AN OLD MOBSTER MOVIE!
THEN YOU MOST ALSO KNOW THAT NICK SCARPA MEANS WHAT HE SAYS! NOW POINT THE NOSE OF THIS EGG-BEATER TOWARD CORSICA--AND KEEP GOING!

YEAH! OLD MOBSTERS SOUND LIKE THAT--BUT THIS ONE AIMS TO OUTRUN THE LAW TO HOME BASE!
WE WERE HEADING THERE WHEN A STORM CAPSIZED THE BOSS'S MOTOR YACHT!
BUT... WE'RE NOT PICKY! THIS CHOPPER WILL DO THE JOB!


IT'S GOT EVERYTHING WE NEED --LOTS OF FUEL--A GOOD PILOT--AND THIS HEATER FOR INSURANCE!
I WAS THINKING OF HOME, TOO. IT WAS A MISTAKE!
DIDN'T KNOW I WAS PACKING ONE, DID YOU!?

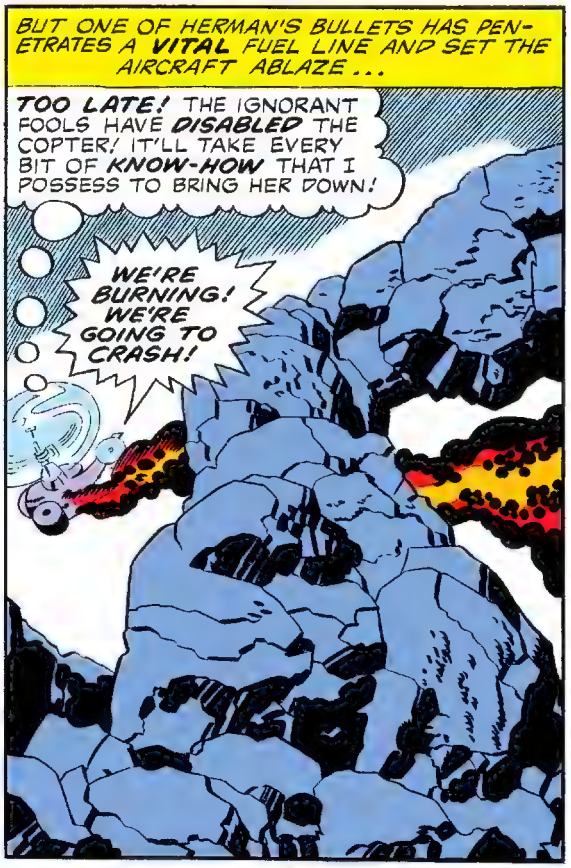
FORGET YOUR HOME--WHEREVER THAT IS! JUST DO AS YOU'RE TOLD AND STAY ALIVE!
THAT'S SOUND ADVICE, FLY-BOY! YOUR NEXT MISTAKE WILL BE FATAL!
WE'VE REACHED THE AFRICAN COAST! I WON'T TURN BACK FOR DEATH HIMSELF!

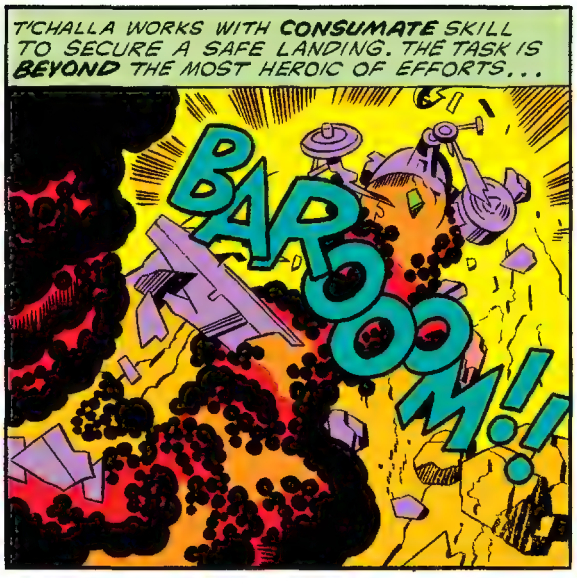

T'CHALLA'S HANDS MOVE TOO SWIFTLY FOR THE EYE TO FOLLOW. THE JET-COPTER SUDDENLY TILTS AT A DANGEROUSLY SHARP ANGLE AND...
WUMMM!!
HEY--! WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?

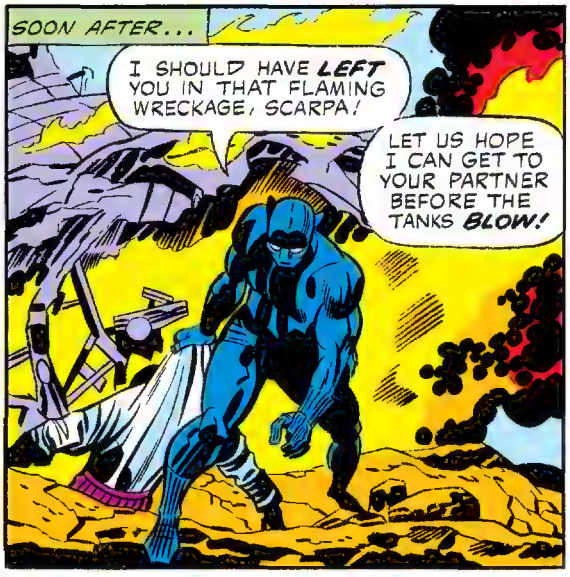
WATCH YOUR FOOTING! WE'VE RUN INTO A BIT OF TURBULENCE!
THINGS SHOULD BE MORE EVENLY BALANCED WHEN IT'S OVER!
NO WAY, FINK!
I'LL WASTE YOU!
I'LL WASTE YOU!!
BLAM!

WHAM! WHAM!
I CAN'T ZERO IN ON HIM, BOSS!
NOT WHILE HE'S SHAKING THIS TUB TO PIECES!
DON'T SHOOT TO KILL! JUST MAKE HIM BLEED A LITTLE! WE NEED HIM ALIVE!

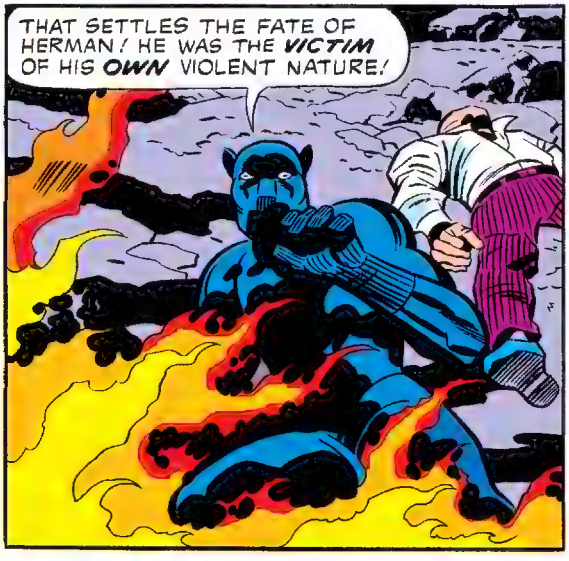
T'CHALLA DONS HIS RITUAL HOOD AS HE SETS THE CONTROLS ON AUTOMATIC PILOT...
KRASH!
I'VE TAKEN ALL I CAN FROM THESE TWO! IT'S TIME TO STRIKE BACK!

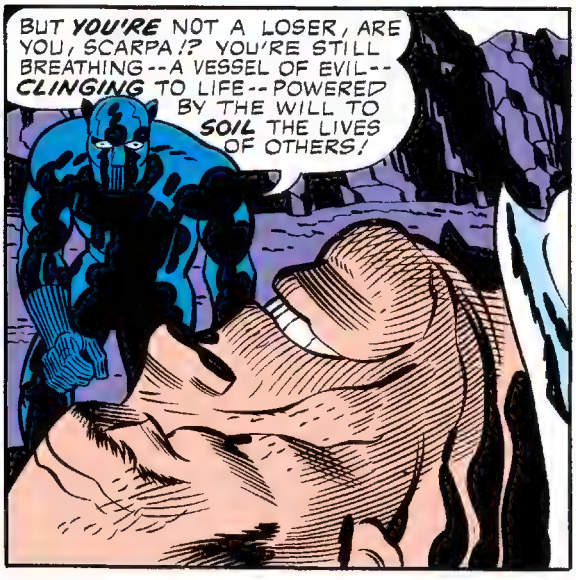

BUT ONE OF HERMAN'S BULLETS HAS PENETRATES A VITAL FUEL LINE AND SET THE AIRCRAFT ABLAZE...
TOO LATE! THE IGNORANT FOOLS HAVE DISABLED THE COPTER! IT'LL TAKE EVERY BIT OF KNOW-HOW THAT I POSSESS TO BRING HER DOWN!
WE'RE BURNING! WE'RE GOING TO CRASH!

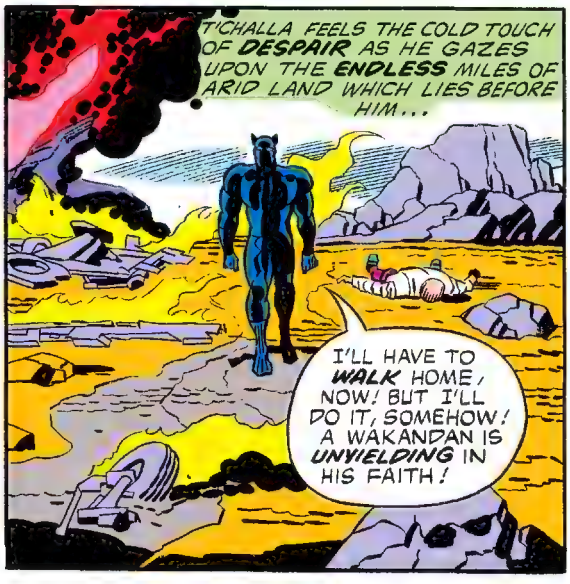

T'CHALLA WORKS WITH CONSUMATE SKILL TO SECURE A SAFE LANDING. THE TASK IS BEYOND THE MOST HEROIC OF EFFORTS...
BARROOOM!!


SOON AFTER...
I SHOULD HAVE LEFT YOU IN THAT FLAMING WRECKAGE, SCARPA!
LET US HOPE I CAN GET TO YOUR PARTNER BEFORE THE TANKS BLOW!

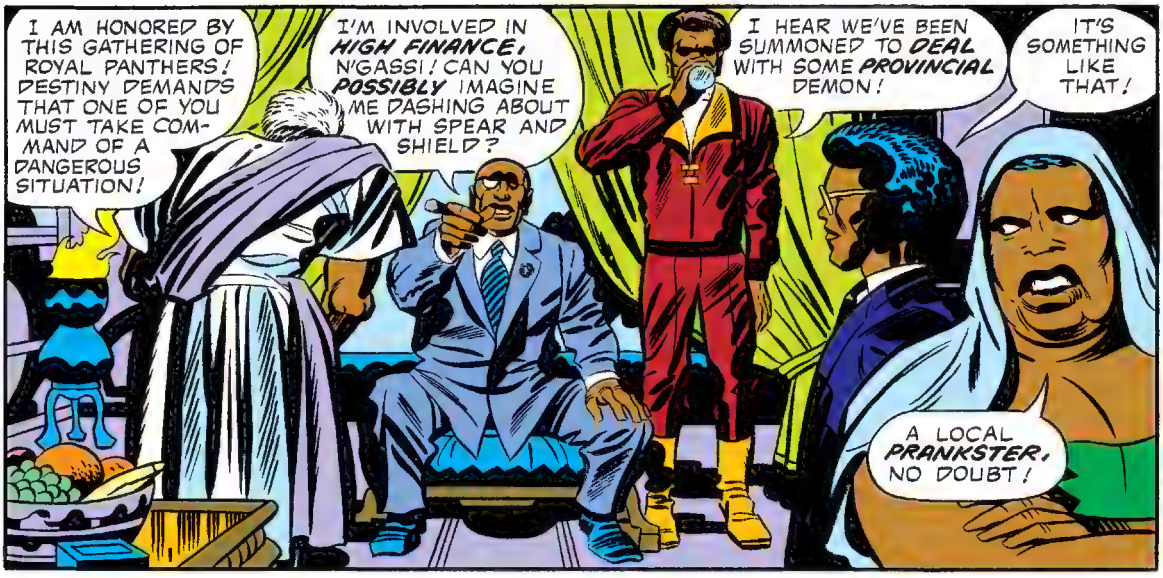
WAHOOOM!


THAT SETTLES THE FATE OF HERMAN! HE WAS THE VICTIM OF HIS OWN VIOLENT NATURE!

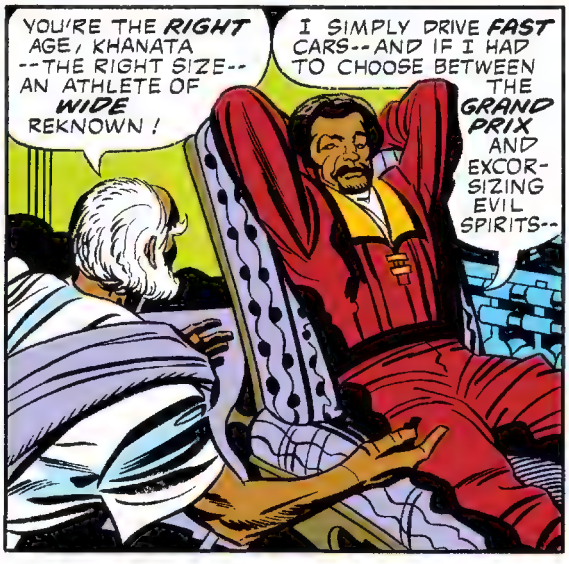

BUT YOU'RE NOT A LOSER, ARE YOU, SCARPA!? YOU'RE STILL BREATHING--A VESSEL OF EVIL--CLINGING TO LIFE--POWERED BY THE WILL TO SOIL THE LIVES OF OTHERS!


T'CHALLA FEELS THE COLD TOUCH OF DESPAIR AS HE GAZES UPON THE ENDLESS MILES OF ARID LAND WHICH LIES BEFORE HIM...
I'LL HAVE TO WALK HOME, NOW! BUT I'LL DO IT, SOMEHOW! A WAKANDAN IS UNYIELDING IN HIS FAITH!

MEANWHILE, IN T'CHALLA'S DOMAIN...
THE MEMBERS OF THE RULING FAMILY AWAIT YOUR PRESENCE, N'GASSI.
SO...FOUR WAS ALL WE COULD MUSTER, EH? I SUPPOSE ALL THE REST ARE TOO OCCUPIED WITH AFFAIRS IN DISTANT LANDS...
THIS ERA OF MOBILITY HAS PLAYED HAVOC WITH OUR HERITAGE! EVEN MIGHTY T'CHALLA IS OUT OF REACH IN THIS GRAVE HOUR...
HE IS SORELY NEEDED, NOBLE ONE!
I'VE SEEN THE OTHERS. THEY SEEM UNLIKELY CANDIDATES FOR THE TASK WE FACE. IT DEMANDS A WARRIOR'S HAND, SIRE! PERHAPS MINE--
YOURS WOULD DO FINE, JIRU...IF IT COURSED WITH THE BLOOD OF ROYALTY!
WAKANDAN TRADITION SHALL NOT BE BROKEN WHILE I GOVERN IN T'CHALLA'S ABSENCE! OPEN THE DOOR.
I SHALL ANNOUNCE YOUR ARRIVAL.
THEN...
WELL, WELL... THE OLD MAN HAS COME AT LAST!
HE DRESSES RATHER SIMPLY FOR AN ADMINISTRATOR OF HIGH OFFICE!
A WISE MAN NEEDN'T BE A FASHION PLATE.
HUNH! I KNEW THE OLD LEOPARD WHEN HE HAD LESS WISDOM AND MORE SPIRIT!
I PRESENT N'GASSI, FIRST REGENT AND AID TO THE MIGHTY T'CHALLA!


I AM HONORED BY THIS GATHERING OF ROYAL PANTHERS! DESTINY DEMANDS THAT ONE OF YOU MUST TAKE COMMAND OF A DANGEROUS SITUATION!
I'M INVOLVED IN HIGH FINANCE, N'GASSI! CAN YOU POSSIBLY IMAGINE ME DASHING ABOUT WITH SPEAR AND SHIELD?
I HEAR WE'VE BEEN SUMMONED TO DEAL WITH SOME PROVINCIAL DEMON!
IT'S SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
A LOCAL PRANKSTER, NO DOUBT!

THE DEMON IS REAL INDEED! AND, IN T'CHALLA'S ABSENCE, THERE MUST BE A BLACK PANTHER AT THE HELM IN THIS CRISIS!
ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT I FIT THIS IMAGE OF DEMON-FIGHTER?!


YOU'RE THE RIGHT AGE, KHANATA --THE RIGHT SIZE-- AN ATHLETE OF WIDE REKNOWN!
I SIMPLY DRIVE FAST CARS--AND IF I HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE GRAND PRIX AND EXCORSIZING EVIL SPIRITS--

WAIT! I'M CONVINCED THIS IS A MEDICAL PROBLEM! IT CALLS NOT FOR ONE WHO CAN FIGHT, BUT A MAN WHO CAN CURE!
THEN YOU INTEND TO TREAT THIS CURSED FOE AS A HOSPITAL PATIENT?

I AM A DOCTOR, N'GASSI!
YOU'RE A CALLOW YOUTH, JOSHUA ITOBO! GAZE UPON THE GREAT VIBRANIUM MOUND! IT CAME FROM THE SKIES--THE SUBSTANCE OF ITS METAL IS UNLIKE ANY KNOWN ON THIS PLANET--!

YOU KNOW THAT EXPOSURE TO VIBRANIUM CAN CHANGE THE BODY STRUCTURE OF HUMANS --AND TRANSFORM THEM INTO LIVING HORRORS!
THAT IS NOTHING BUT WAKANDAN FOLK-LORE!
JAKARRA, THE HALF-BROTHER OF T'CHALLA, DIDN'T THINK SO! HE DARED TO SUBMIT HIS OWN BODY TO THE VIBRANIUM EFFECT IN SEARCH OF POWER--AND SUCCEEDED ONLY TOO WELL!
FOR HE IS THE WILD THING WHICH ROAMS AMONG US --INCREDIBLY CHANGED AND RESISTANT TO OUR EVERY ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE HIM!!
SUDDENLY...
CRASH!
HAIL, COUSINS!
JAKARRA!
BY THE SACRED PANTHER FETISH!
B-BUT THIS CAN'T BE JAKARRA --NOT THIS REPELLENT CREATURE!!
YOU SEE ME AS VIBRANIUM MADE ME, ZUNI!
N'GASSI TOLD THE TRUTH! YOU WON'T STOP HIM WITH BAND-AIDS, DOCTOR!
YOU WON'T STOP ME AT ALL! I'VE COME TO KILL THE LOT OF YOU --AND CLAIM THIS DOMAIN BY RIGHT OF VICTORY IN COMBAT!
WELL, I FOR ONE DEFY YOUR THREAT! THE YOUNG ARE NOT NECESSARILY CRAVEN!

ROYAL WAKANDANS YIELD NO GROUND!!
YOU HEARD THE BOY! WE JUST CAN'T STAND BY AND DO NOTHING!
KRAK!
HELP HIM! DON'T LET HIM DIE!
ALMOST IN UNISON, THE RULING FAMILY BREAKS ITS BONDS OF INDECISION AND...
ATTACK THE BEAST!
WITH WHAT!? HE'LL TEAR THIS TO SHREDS!
INEPT CLOWNS! YOUR MOCKERY OF BATTLE WILL ONLY EARN YOU A COSTLIER DEATH!
GUARDS! GUARDS!
THE EVIL ONE IS HERE!
STAND CLEAR OF HIM! THESE WEAPONS ARE HIS MATCH!
WE'LL SEE HOW HIS TOUGHENED HIDE REACTS TO ACID!!
FSSS!
THE POWERFUL CHEMICAL BURNS ITS WAY INTO JAKARRA'S ARMORED TISSUE...
HE'S NOT PLEASED WITH THE TREATMENT! I THINK WE'VE GOT HIM!
YOU TRAITORS WILL PAY FOR THIS!!
SURRENDER TO THE CULT!

JAKARRA BELLOWS IN RAGE AND PLUNGES HEADLONG OUT OF THE NEAREST WINDOW...
WE WERE TOO LATE TO OUT-FLANK HIM! HE'S ESCAPING!
THAT DEMON IS BOUND T'LEAVE A TRAIL WE CAN FOLLOW! WE'LL FIND HIM AGAIN!

AND IN THE WAKE OF THE BRIEF SKIRMISH...
THE FAMILY IS PROUD OF YOU, JOSHUA ITOBO. SUCH COURAGE SHOULD BE REWARDED!
HE'S AWAKENED THE PANTHER IN ME. I FEEL YOUNG AGAIN!
THAT'S NOT HOW I FEEL. I'M LUCKY TO BE ALIVE!

TELL US WHAT MUST BE DONE, N'GASSI! WE'LL FIGHT AS WARRIORS IF NEED BE!
THEN SO YOU SHALL --ALL OF YOU!
IF TRADITION DEMANDS A BLACK PANTHER, CONSIDER ME YOUR MAN!

NO, THERE IS ONLY ONE T'CHALLA! BUT, EACH OF YOU MUST STAND READY TO CONTRIBUTE WHAT YOU CAN UNTIL HIS RETURN.
THE DAYS AHEAD WILL BE DARK INDEED. WHEN JAKARRA'S CHANGE IS COMPLETE--HE MAY BECOME SOMETHING WE CANNOT CONTROL!

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE IN THE VAST WASTELANDS OF NORTH AFRICA...
CAN'T GO ON MUCH FARTHER... I'LL REST IN THE SHADE OF THESE ROCKS AND WAIT FOR NIGHTFALL...

IT WILL BE COOLER THEN... AND EASIER TO TRAVEL.
WITH SCARPA AS AN ADDED BURDEN, THE ODDS AGAINST MY RETURNING HOME SEEM OVERWHELMING--!!

A CRISIS DEEPENS AND THE TERROR GROWS! AND IN THE VANGUARD OF RESISTANCE--
THE BLACK MUSKETEERS

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02685
HIS HOMELAND FACING HOLOCAUST--T'CHALLA GOES WILD!
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BLACK PANTHER™
THE PANTHER FIGHTS THE UNCANNY TO REACH HIS DOOMED DOMAIN!
PRESENTING: THE BLACK MUSKETEERS!
LAST HOPE FOR THE WAKANDA!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee Presents: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN, AND DRAWN BY JACK KIRBY | EMBELLISHMENT: MIKE ROYER | COLORING: I. VARTANOFF | DEHYDRATION: ARCHIE GOODWIN

HORROR STALKS THE DOMAIN OF HIS FAMILY, AS T'CHALLA OF THE PANTHER CULT SEEKS THE ROAD HOME IN A SANDY WASTELAND, BARE OF TRAILS. TO COMBAT HIS DESPERATION IS A SUPERB WILL AND STRENGTH--BUT HIS TRIBE MUST DEPEND UPON THE--
BLACK MUSKETEERS
THERE SEEMS TO BE NO END TO THIS SUN-BAKED DESERT!
I'VE LOST ALL SENSE OF TIME AND DIRECTION!

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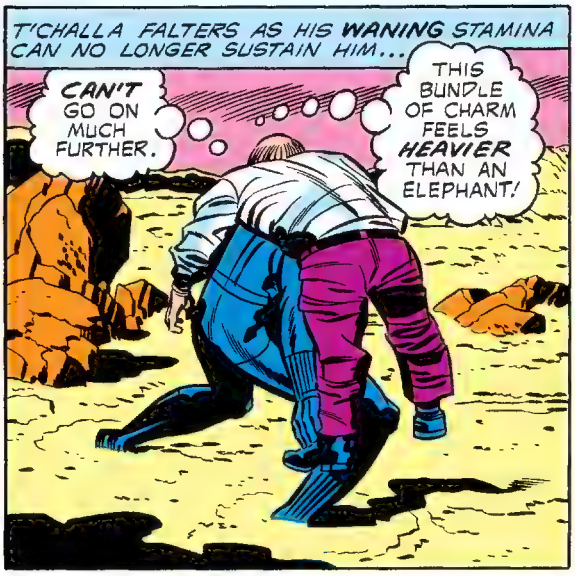
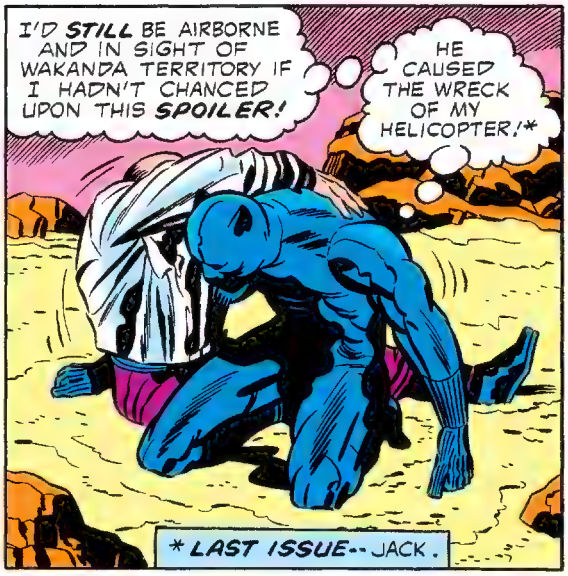
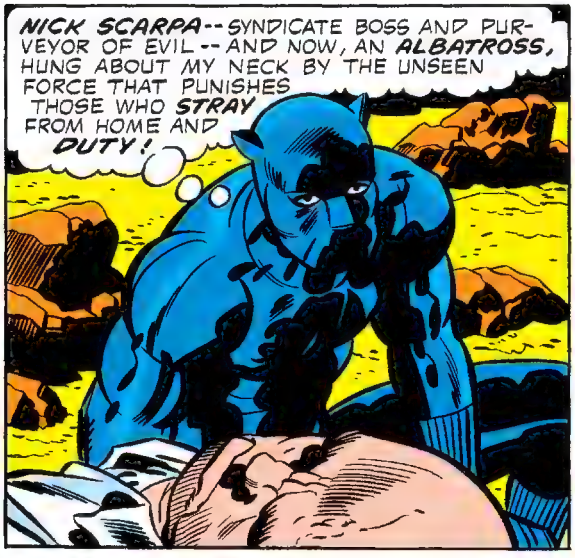
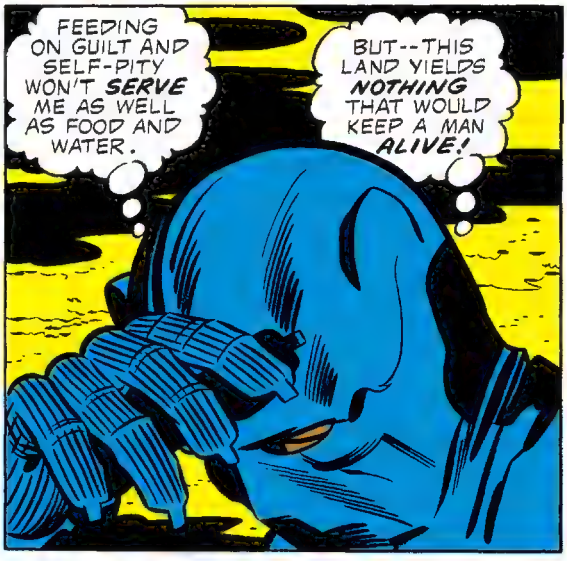
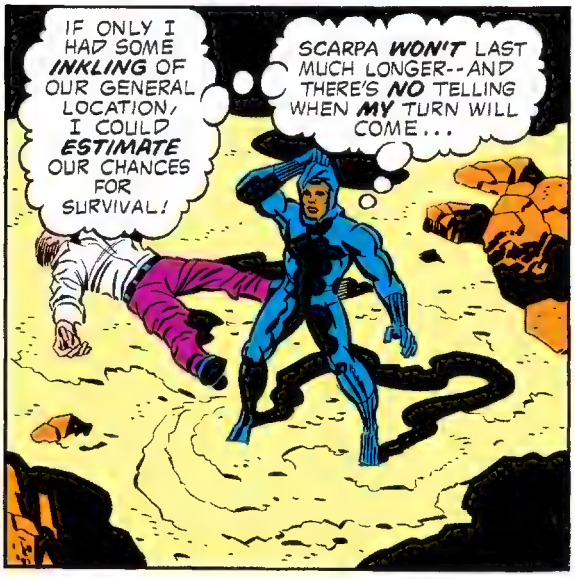
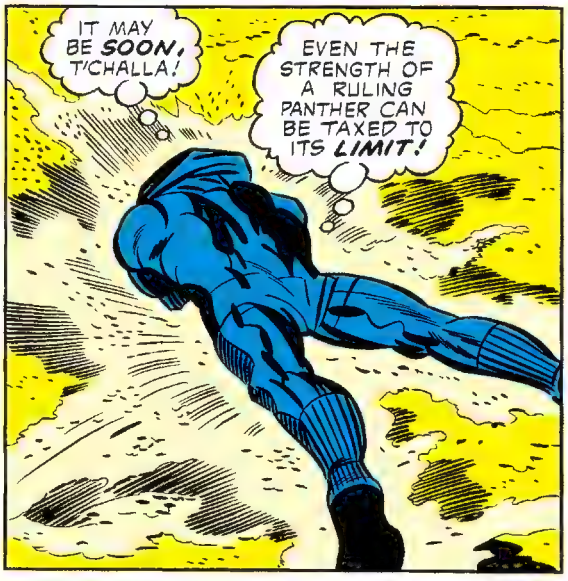

T'CHALLA FALTERS AS HIS WANING STAMINA CAN NO LONGER SUSTAIN HIM...
CAN'T GO ON MUCH FURTHER.
THIS BUNDLE OF CHARM FEELS HEAVIER THAN AN ELEPHANT!

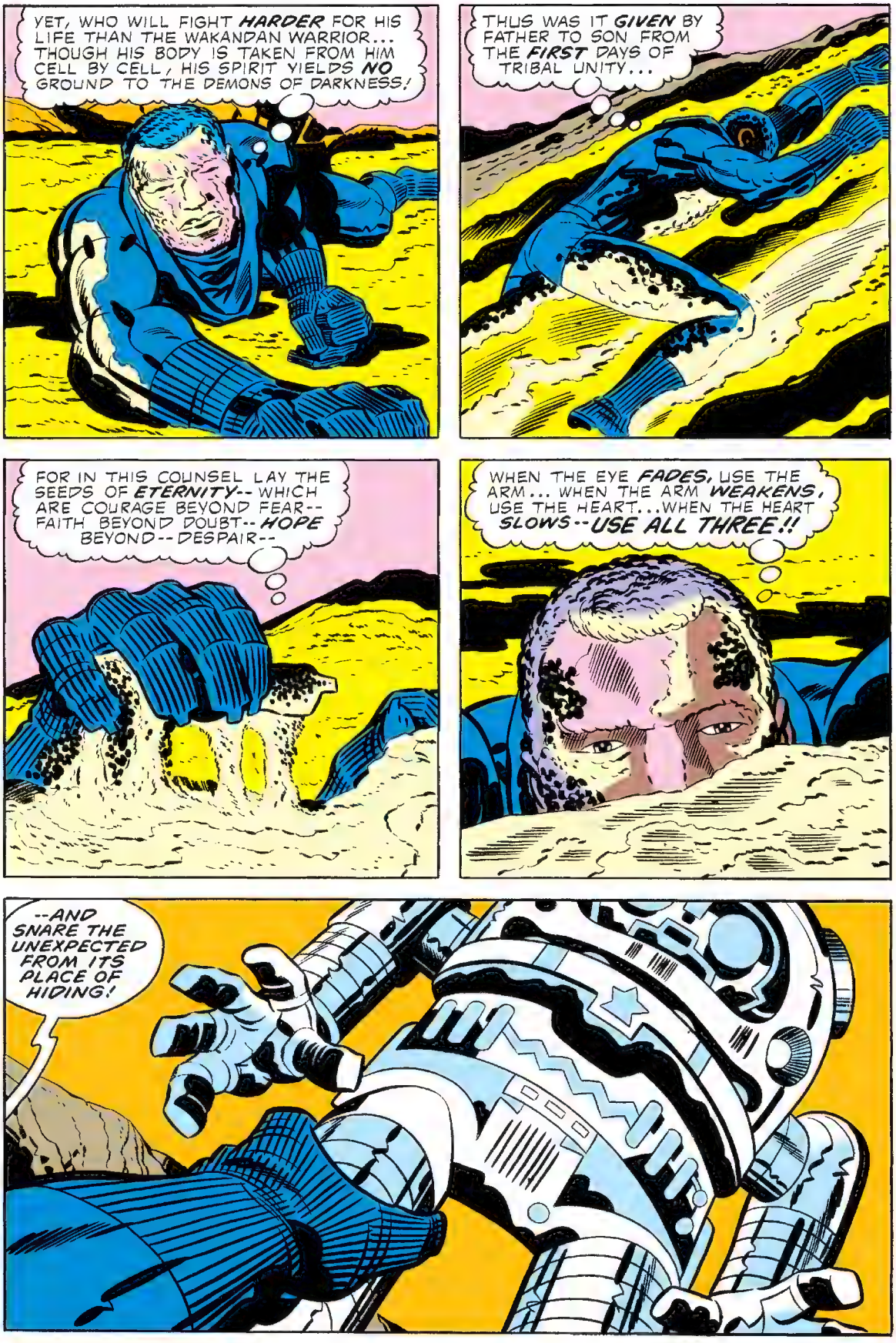

I'D STILL BE AIRBORNE AND IN SIGHT OF WAKANDA TERRITORY IF I HADN'T CHANCED UPON THIS SPOILER!
HE CAUSED THE WRECK OF MY HELICOPTER!*
* LAST ISSUE-- JACK.

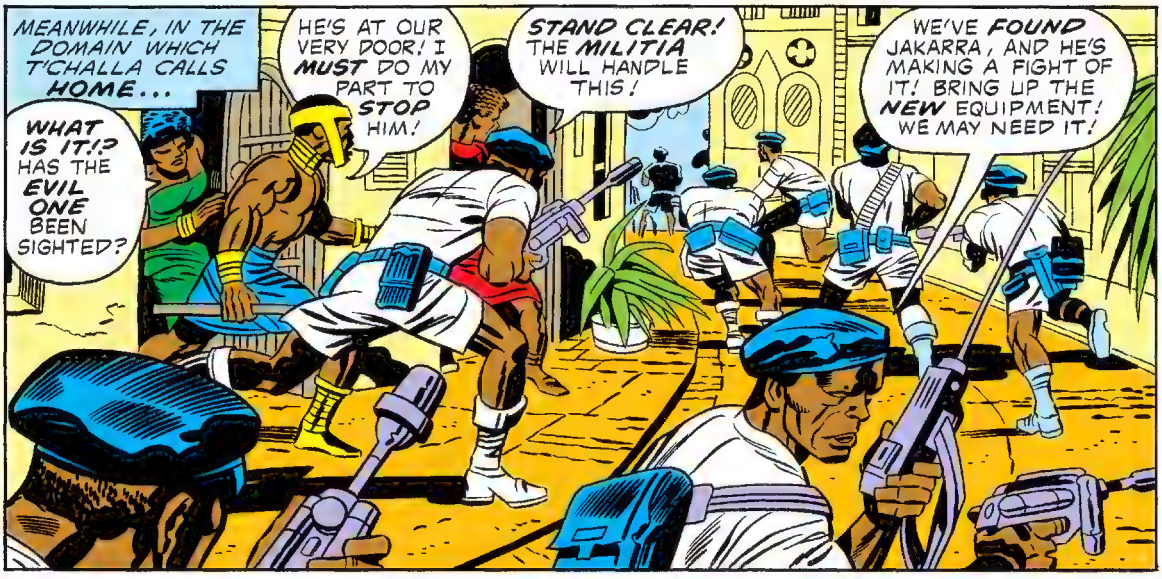

NICK SCARPA-- SYNDICATE BOSS AND PURVEYOR OF EVIL -- AND NOW, AN ALBATROSS, HUNG ABOUT MY NECK BY THE UNSEEN FORCE THAT PUNISHES THOSE WHO STRAY FROM HOME AND DUTY!

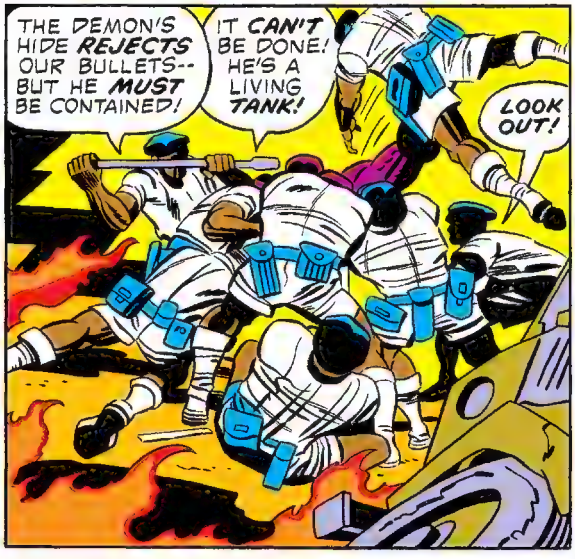

FEEDING ON GUILT AND SELF-PITY WON'T SERVE ME AS WELL AS FOOD AND WATER.
BUT--THIS LAND YIELDS NOTHING THAT WOULD KEEP A MAN ALIVE!

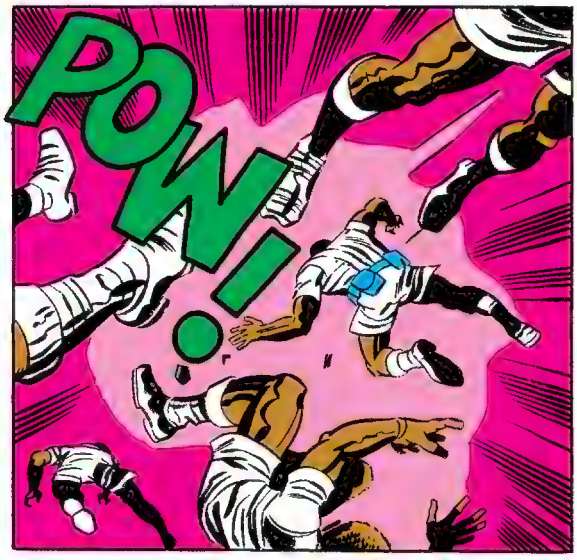

IF ONLY I HAD SOME INKLING OF OUR GENERAL LOCATION, I COULD ESTIMATE OUR CHANCES FOR SURVIVAL!
SCARPA WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER--AND THERE'S NO TELLING WHEN MY TURN WILL COME...


IT MAY BE SOON, T'CHALLA!
EVEN THE STRENGTH OF A RULING PANTHER CAN BE TAXED TO ITS LIMIT!


YET, WHO WILL FIGHT HARDER FOR HIS LIFE THAN THE WAKANDAN WARRIOR... THOUGH HIS BODY IS TAKEN FROM HIM CELL BY CELL, HIS SPIRIT YIELDS NO GROUND TO THE DEMONS OF DARKNESS!
THUS WAS IT GIVEN BY FATHER TO SON FROM THE FIRST DAYS OF TRIBAL UNITY...
FOR IN THIS COUNSEL LAY THE SEEDS OF ETERNITY-- WHICH ARE COURAGE BEYOND FEAR-- FAITH BEYOND DOUBT-- HOPE BEYOND-- DESPAIR--
WHEN THE EYE FADES, USE THE ARM... WHEN THE ARM WEAKENS, USE THE HEART...WHEN THE HEART SLOWS--USE ALL THREE!!
--AND SNARE THE UNEXPECTED FROM ITS PLACE OF HIDING!

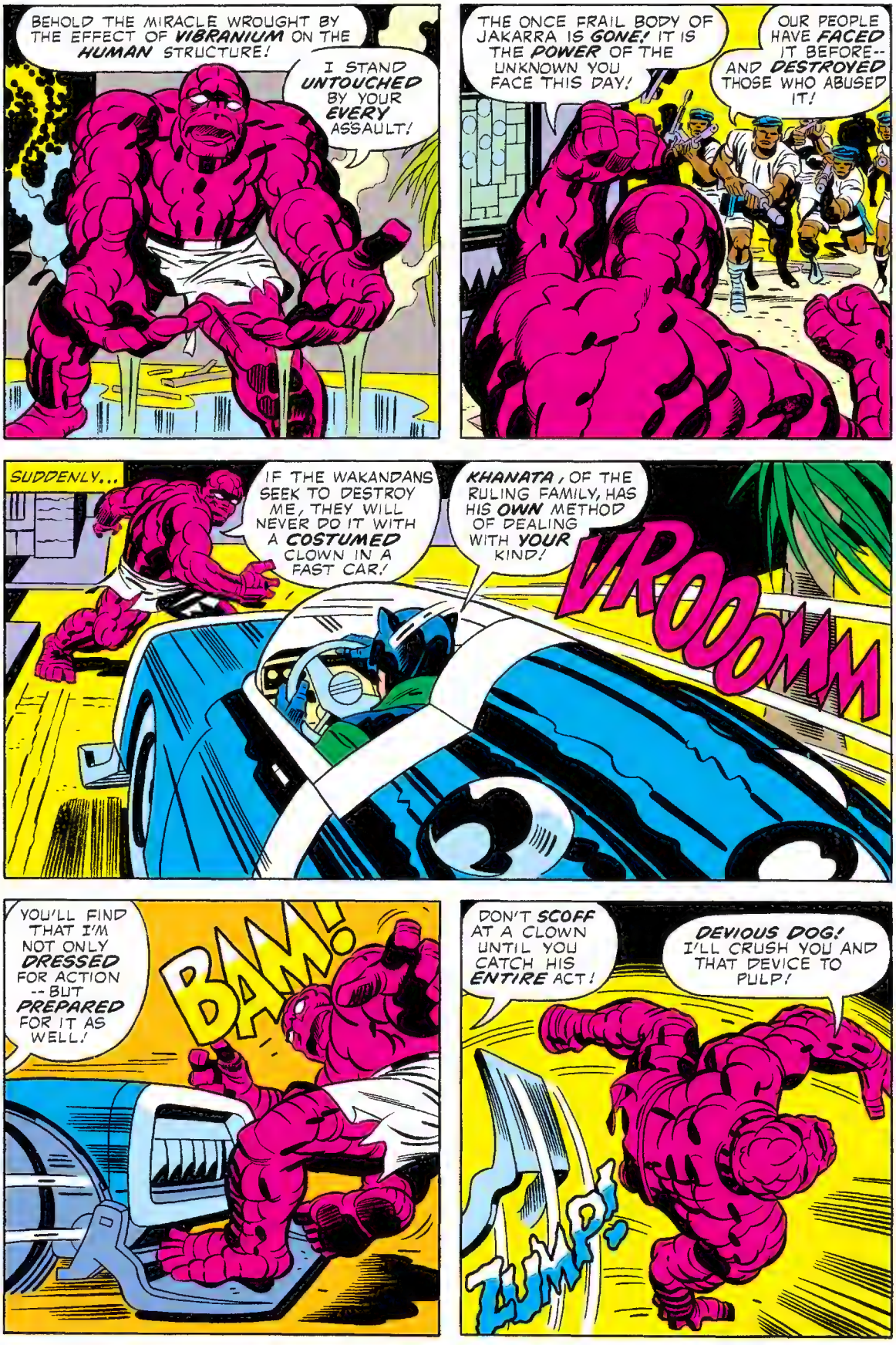

MEANWHILE, IN THE DOMAIN WHICH T'CHALLA CALLS HOME...
WHAT IS IT!? HAS THE EVIL ONE BEEN SIGHTED?
HE'S AT OUR VERY DOOR! I MUST DO MY PART TO STOP HIM!
STAND CLEAR! THE MILITIA WILL HANDLE THIS!
WE'VE FOUND JAKARRA, AND HE'S MAKING A FIGHT OF IT! BRING UP THE NEW EQUIPMENT! WE MAY NEED IT!

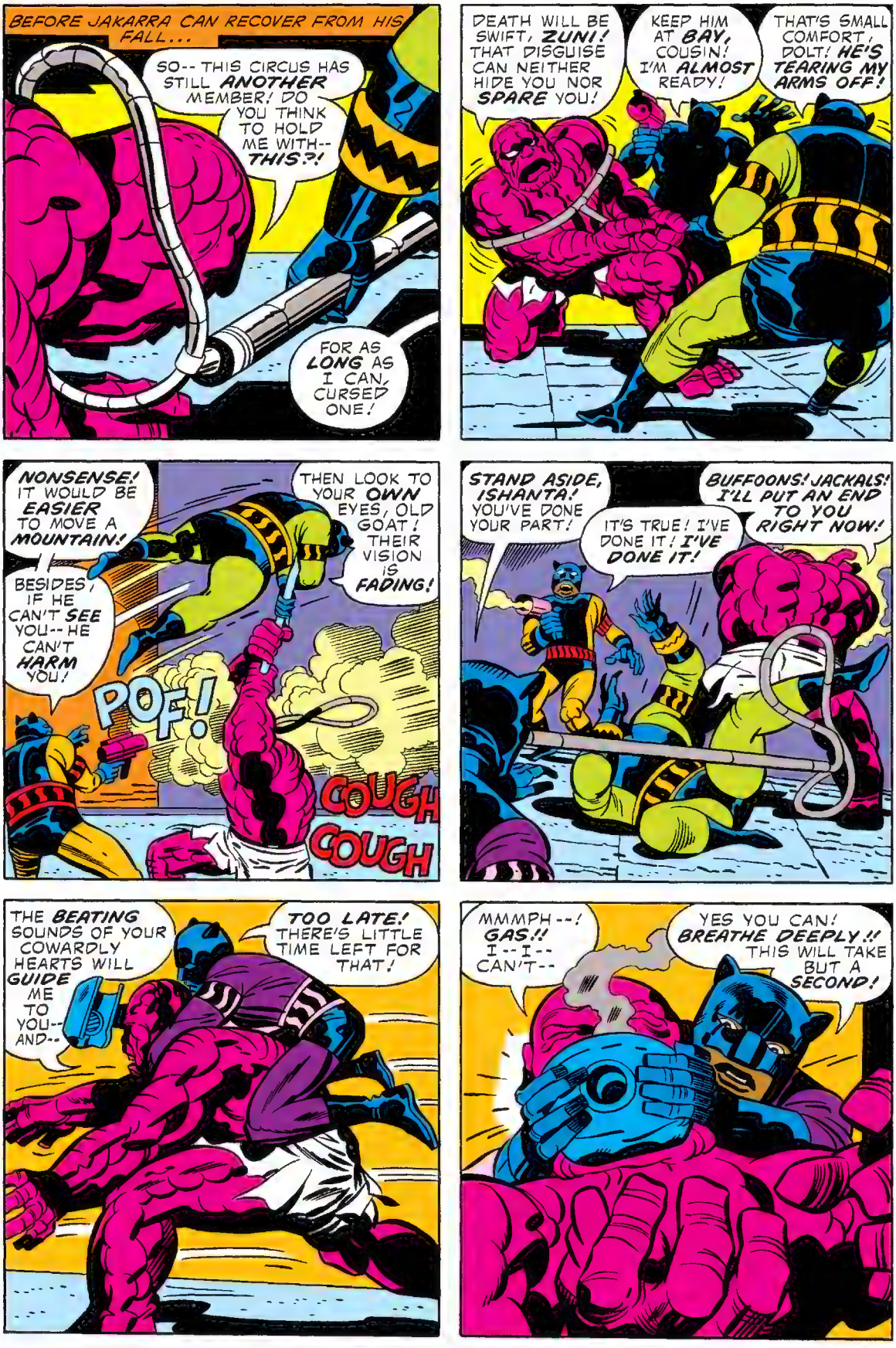

THE DEMON'S HIDE REJECTS OUR BULLETS-- BUT HE MUST BE CONTAINED!
IT CAN'T BE DONE! HE'S A LIVING TANK!
LOOK OUT!

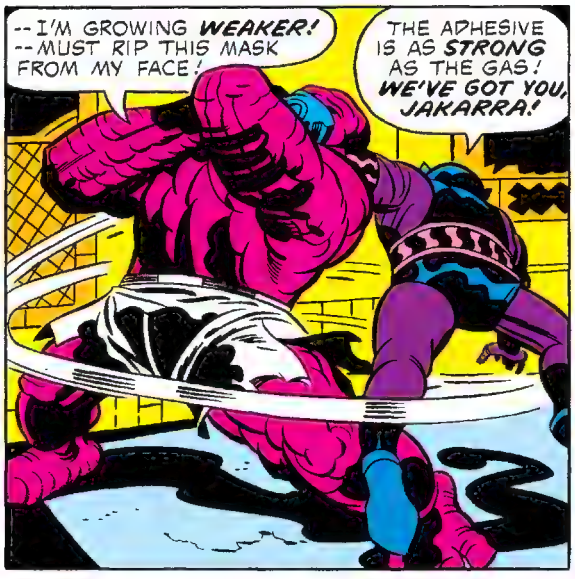

POW!

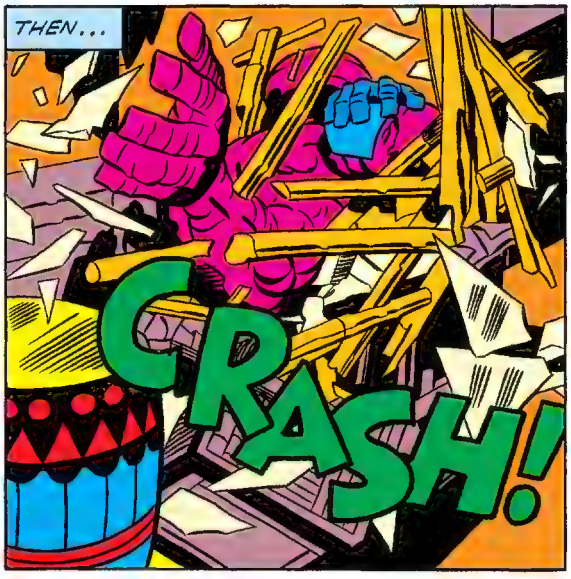
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD HIM WITH STANDARD EQUIPMENT! HE NEEDS A TASTE OF THE ACID RIFLES!
THEY'VE STOPPED HIM BEFORE!

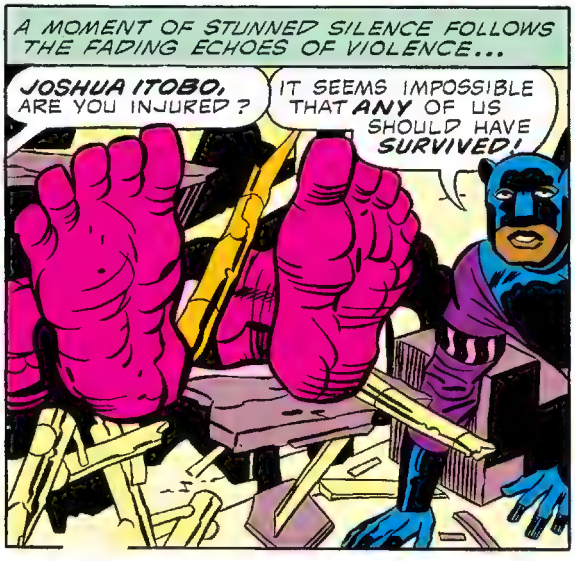
DO YOUR WORST, YOU FOOLS! I CAN NOW RESIST YOUR FIERY CHEMICALS!
ZZSH!


BEHOLD THE MIRACLE WROUGHT BY THE EFFECT OF VIBRANIUM ON THE HUMAN STRUCTURE!
I STAND UNTOUCHED BY YOUR EVERY ASSAULT!
THE ONCE FRAIL BODY OF JAKARRA IS GONE! IT IS THE POWER OF THE UNKNOWN YOU FACE THIS DAY!
OUR PEOPLE HAVE FACED IT BEFORE-- AND DESTROYED THOSE WHO ABUSED IT!
SUDDENLY...
IF THE WAKANDANS SEEK TO DESTROY ME, THEY WILL NEVER DO IT WITH A COSTUMED CLOWN IN A FAST CAR!
KHANATA, OF THE RULING FAMILY, HAS HIS OWN METHOD OF DEALING WITH YOUR KIND!
VROOOMM
YOU'LL FIND THAT I'M NOT ONLY DRESSED FOR ACTION -- BUT PREPARED FOR IT AS WELL!
BAM!
DON'T SCOFF AT A CLOWN UNTIL YOU CATCH HIS ENTIRE ACT!
DEVIOUS DOG! I'LL CRUSH YOU AND THAT DEVICE TO PULP!
LUMP!


BEFORE JAKARRA CAN RECOVER FROM HIS FALL...
SO-- THIS CIRCUS HAS STILL ANOTHER MEMBER! DO YOU THINK TO HOLD ME WITH-- THIS?!
FOR AS LONG AS I CAN, CURSED ONE!
DEATH WILL BE SWIFT, ZUNI! THAT DISGUISE CAN NEITHER HIDE YOU NOR SPARE YOU!
KEEP HIM AT BAY, COUSIN! I'M ALMOST READY!
THAT'S SMALL COMFORT, DOLT! HE'S TEARING MY ARMS OFF!
NONSENSE! IT WOULD BE EASIER TO MOVE A MOUNTAIN!
BESIDES, IF HE CAN'T SEE YOU-- HE CAN'T HARM YOU!
THEN LOOK TO YOUR OWN EYES, OLD GOAT! THEIR VISION IS FADING!
POF!
COUGH
COUGH
STAND ASIDE, ISHANTA! YOU'VE DONE YOUR PART!
IT'S TRUE! I'VE DONE IT! I'VE DONE IT!
BUFFOONS! JACKALS! I'LL PUT AN END TO YOU RIGHT NOW!
THE BEATING SOUNDS OF YOUR COWARDLY HEARTS WILL GUIDE ME TO YOU-- AND--
TOO LATE! THERE'S LITTLE TIME LEFT FOR THAT!
MMMPH--! GAS!! I--I-- CAN'T--
YES YOU CAN! BREATHE DEEPLY!! THIS WILL TAKE BUT A SECOND!

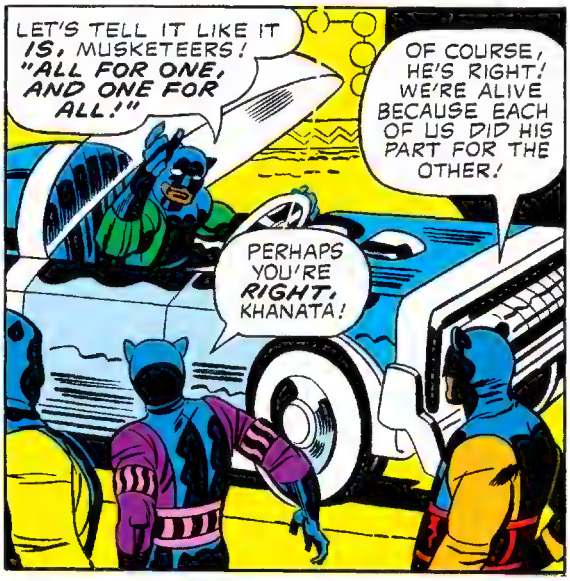

--I'M GROWING WEAKER! --MUST RIP THIS MASK FROM MY FACE!
THE ADHESIVE IS AS STRONG AS THE GAS! WE'VE GOT YOU, JAKARRA!


THEN...
CRASH!


A MOMENT OF STUNNED SILENCE FOLLOWS THE FADING ECHOES OF VIOLENCE...
JOSHUA ITOBO, ARE YOU INJURED?
IT SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE THAT ANY OF US SHOULD HAVE SURVIVED!

BUT WE DID! YOUR PLAN WAS PERFECTION ITSELF!
IT WAS AN ACT OF MADNESS, CARRIED OUT BY FOUR UNFIT FOR BATTLE!
YOU MEAN FOUR OF WILL AND COURAGE!

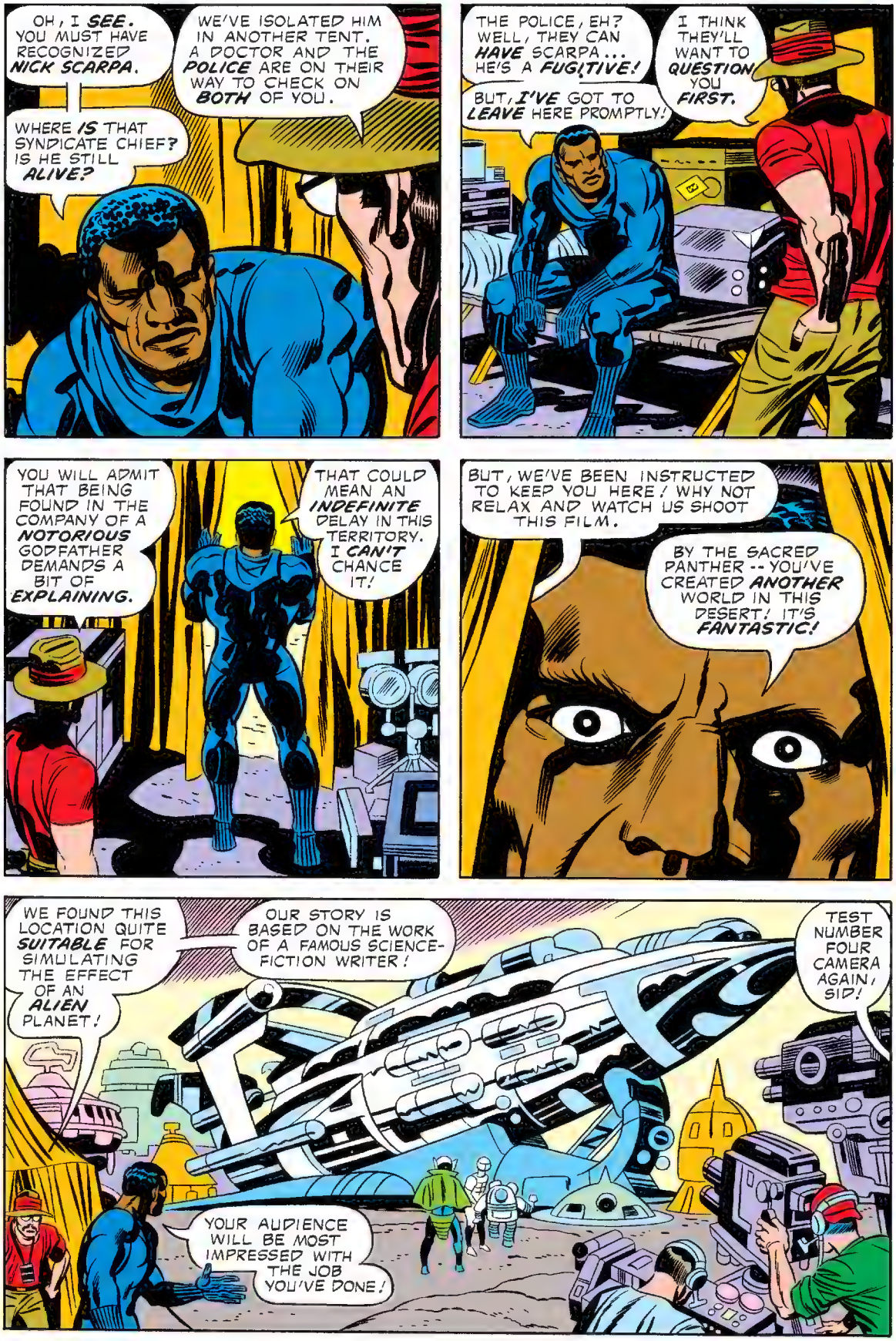
SUPPOSE WE DID HAVE ALL THAT! WE MUST BE TRUE PANTHERS, ZUNI!
ARE WE NOT OF THE RULING FAMILY!? ARE WE NOT KIN OF MIGHTY T'CHALLA!?
HE WOULD BE PROUD OF US! I'M CERTAIN OF IT!


LET'S TELL IT LIKE IT IS, MUSKETEERS! "ALL FOR ONE, AND ONE FOR ALL!"
OF COURSE, HE'S RIGHT! WE'RE ALIVE BECAUSE EACH OF US DID HIS PART FOR THE OTHER!
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, KHANATA!

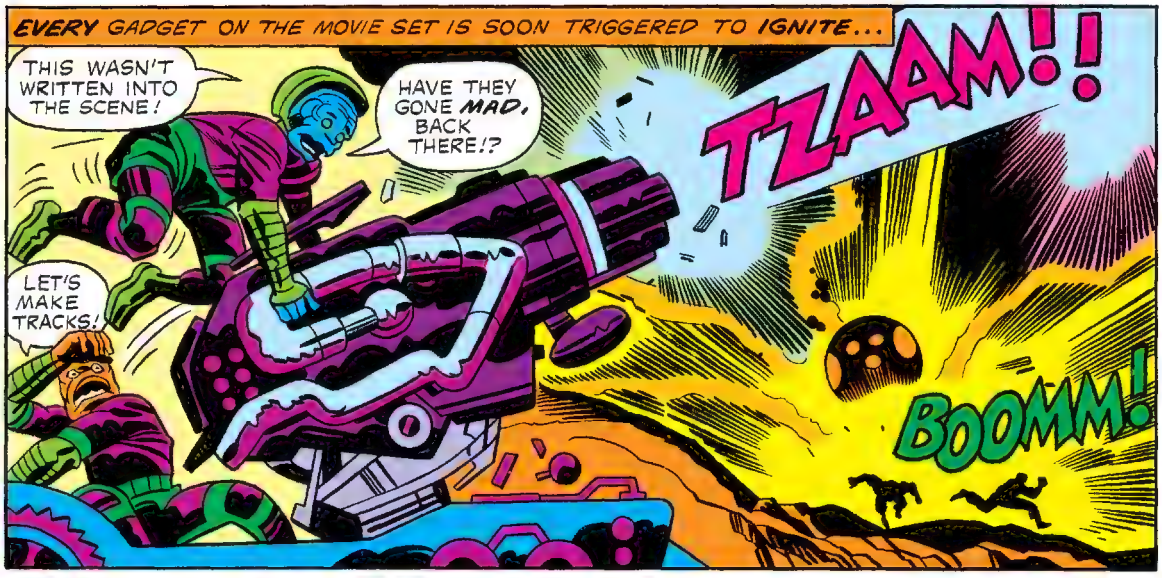
MEANWHILE, IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF N'GASSI, WHO GOVERNS IN T'CHALLA'S ABSENCE...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT POSSESSED ME TO CALL UPON THE RULING FAMILY IN THIS CRISIS! LOOK AT THESE EXPENDITURES!
THEY'VE BEEN VERY SECRETIVE THESE PAST DAYS.
COSTUMES-- SMOKE GUNS-- CHEMICALS-- ADHESIVE--
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE ENCOURAGED THOSE MISFITS!
AN AGING FINANCIER... A FEMALE GROWN TOO FAT... A RACING DRIVER AND A DOCTOR, BARELY INTO MANHOOD...
HARDLY FIT FOR T'CHALLA'S WORK, I'D SAY!
HOW I WISH FOR HIS SWIFT RETURN!
THERE HAS BEEN FIGHTING IN THE STREETS! PERHAPS THE MILITIA HAS FINALLY FINISHED JAKARRA!
WE'D HAVE HAD THE NEWS AT THIS HOUR, NOBLE ONE...
THAT WALKING PLAGUE MUST BE STOPPED! HE'LL EITHER POISON THIS VILLAGE ... OR DESTROY IT! EXPOSING HIMSELF TO VIBRANIUM HAS MADE HIM INTO A THING UNNATURAL TO THIS EARTH!
THAT'S WHY HE MUST REMAIN A WAKANDA PROBLEM!
I UNDERSTAND... IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO ALLOW HIM ACCESS TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! BUT SUPPOSE HIS POWER GROWS? SUPPOSE HE GAINS THE UPPER HAND?
WE DARE NOT THINK OF THAT!
THE MILITIA IS FAR FROM IDLE! THEY WILL SURELY FIND A WAY TO CONTAIN JAKARRA!
THIS IS A TIME TO SEEK STRENGTH FROM THE GREAT PANTHER SPIRIT!

IT SEEMS THAT THE SAME THOUGHT IS IN YOUR HEART, SIRE... THE RITUAL DOOR IS OPEN!
JOIN ME, JIRU.
SUDDENLY, UPON ENTERING...
IT'S THE RULING FAMILY--!
OPTIMISTS! THEY GREET THE PANTHER IN TRIUMPH NOT YET ACHIEVED!
WRONG, N'GASSI! YOUR UNLIKELY CANDIDATES FOR T'CHALLA'S JOB HAVE DONE HIS WORK!
WE ARE PROUD TO SAY THAT THE TASK WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH HIGH RISK AND MINIMAL INJURY.
JOSHUA ITOBO REFERS TO MY BACKSIDE... IT'S REALLY TOO WELL PADDED TO SUFFER BADLY IN A FALL!
IN SHORT, YOU OLD LEOPARD-- WE'VE BROUGHT IN JAKARRA! AND PUT AN END TO HIS RAMPAGE!
THERE'S A SUBSTANTIAL DENT IN MY CAR TO PROVE IT! I EXPECT TO PAY A PRETTY PENNY FOR REPAIRS!
WHEN YOU SUGGESTED THAT EACH OF US CONTRIBUTE IN THIS CRISIS, WE DID JUST THAT--AS A TEAM! AND A MOST SUCCESSFUL TEAM AS YOU WILL SEE!
BEHOLD, WISE ONE! THE RIDDLE OF JAKARRA IS NOW OURS TO SOLVE WITHOUT DANGER TO OTHERS!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SOLVE THIS! HE MUST BE DESTROYED AT ONCE--!!

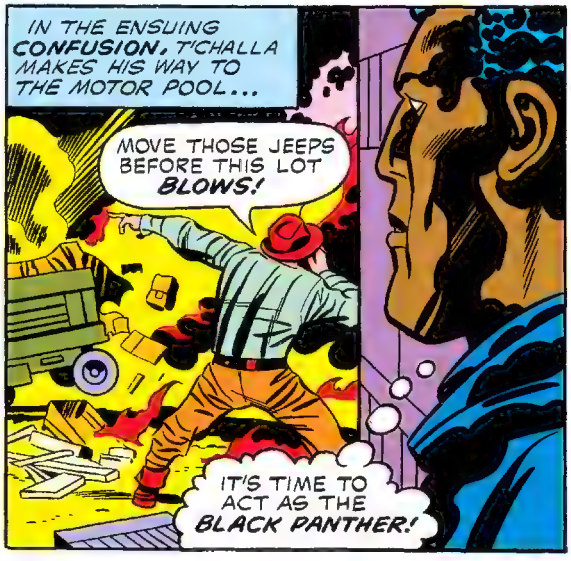
MEANWHILE, IN THE AREA KNOWN AS THE SUDAN...
YOU MEAN HE ISN'T ONE OF US? BUT, THAT COSTUME?
COSTUME, SHMOSTUME! I FOUND HIM CRAWLING IN THE DESERT--ALMOST DYING OF FATIGUE!
THAT GOES DOUBLE FOR HIS FRIEND--THE GUY'S NOT ONLY DEHYDRATED, BUT WOUNDED AS WELL.
POOR MAN! DRINK SOME MORE OF THIS COLD MILK--IT'S VERY REFRESHING...
THANK YOU, MISS...YOU'RE VERY KIND...
HE'LL MAKE IT, CAST --SO DON'T WASTE YOUR ENTIRE LUNCH BREAK PLAYING "EMERGENCY WARD!" THAT'S ANOTHER PICTURE!
OKAY, SLAVE-DRIVER. WE'LL BE ON THE SET WHEN WE'RE NEEDED.
WHAT'S MORE, YOUR BUDGET IS LARGE ENOUGH TO ALLOW US SOME EXTRA TIME!
WHY DON'T YOU LET HIM REST--AND GET READY FOR THE NEXT SCENE.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HIS EYES POP WHEN WE MET, MISTER GERARD!
A ROBOT WOULD GET THE SAME REACTION IN TIMES SQUARE!
I SUPPOSE HE MUST HAVE TAKEN ME FOR SOME SORT OF TIN MIRAGE!
NOW, HIGH-TAIL IT, WILL YOU? I'D LIKE TO TALK TO HIM IN PRIVATE!
ABOUT WHAT? MY SITUATION WAS OBVIOUS!

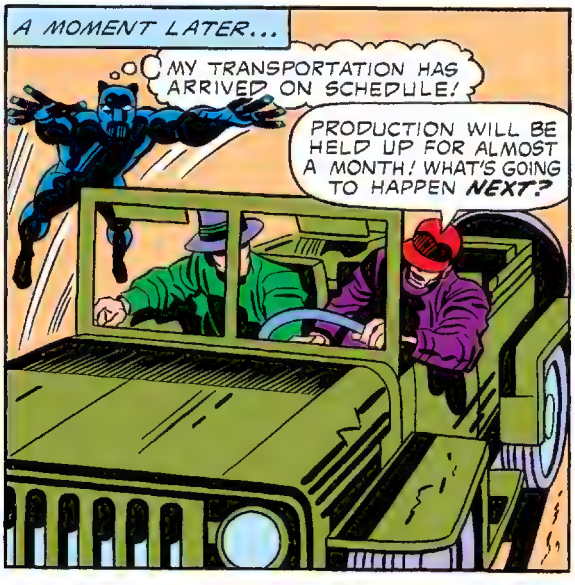

OH, I SEE. YOU MUST HAVE RECOGNIZED NICK SCARPA.
WE'VE ISOLATED HIM IN ANOTHER TENT. A DOCTOR AND THE POLICE ARE ON THEIR WAY TO CHECK ON BOTH OF YOU.
WHERE IS THAT SYNDICATE CHIEF? IS HE STILL ALIVE?
THE POLICE, EH? WELL, THEY CAN HAVE SCARPA... HE'S A FUGITIVE!
I THINK THEY'LL WANT TO QUESTION YOU FIRST.
BUT, I'VE GOT TO LEAVE HERE PROMPTLY!
YOU WILL ADMIT THAT BEING FOUND IN THE COMPANY OF A NOTORIOUS GODFATHER DEMANDS A BIT OF EXPLAINING.
THAT COULD MEAN AN INDEFINITE DELAY IN THIS TERRITORY. I CAN'T CHANCE IT!
BUT, WE'VE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO KEEP YOU HERE! WHY NOT RELAX AND WATCH US SHOOT THIS FILM.
BY THE SACRED PANTHER -- YOU'VE CREATED ANOTHER WORLD IN THIS DESERT! IT'S FANTASTIC!
WE FOUND THIS LOCATION QUITE SUITABLE FOR SIMULATING THE EFFECT OF AN ALIEN PLANET!
OUR STORY IS BASED ON THE WORK OF A FAMOUS SCIENCE-FICTION WRITER!
TEST NUMBER FOUR CAMERA AGAIN, SID!
YOUR AUDIENCE WILL BE MOST IMPRESSED WITH THE JOB YOU'VE DONE!

AS YOU CAN SEE, WE LEAN HEAVILY ON COSTUMES AND SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT!
I LIKE YOUR FLEET OF TRUCKS AND JEEPS. THAT'S A FAIR-SIZED MOTOR POOL.
IT'S TRANSPORTATION THAT INTERESTS ME MOST, GERARD. AS SOON AS I'M THROUGH INSPECTING THAT MASTER CONSOLE, I PLAN TO BE ON MY WAY TO OTHER PARTS!
NOW SEE HERE! YOU MUSTN'T BECOME DIFFICULT!
T'CHALLA MOVES WITH THE SWIFTNESS OF A JUNGLE CAT...
STOP HIM! STOP HIM!
A CONCERT, FRIEND! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO REALLY PLAY THIS THING!
HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON--!?
WAP!
FZOOOOM!
I CALL THIS MY SYMPHONY IN CHAOS!


EVERY GADGET ON THE MOVIE SET IS SOON TRIGGERED TO IGNITE...
THIS WASN'T WRITTEN INTO THE SCENE!
HAVE THEY GONE MAD, BACK THERE!?
LET'S MAKE TRACKS!
TZAAM!!
BOOMM!

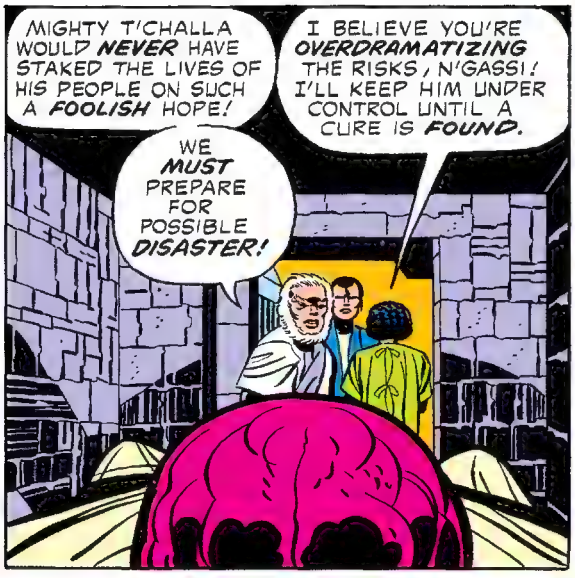
WUMF!
REALISM! REALISM! IT'S ALL GERARD EVER THINKS ABOUT!

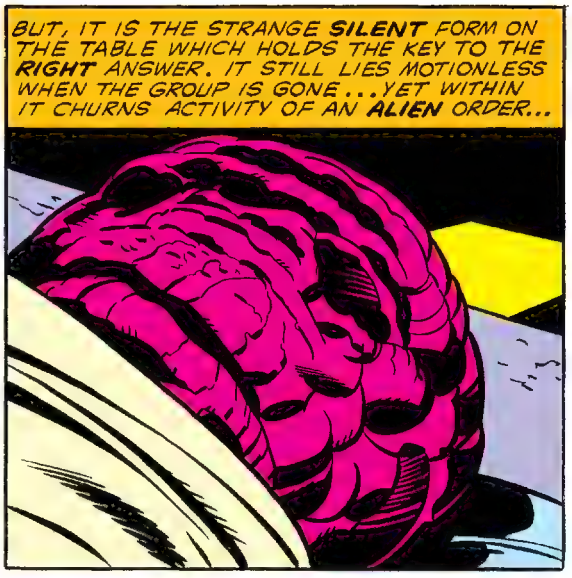

IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION, T'CHALLA MAKES HIS WAY TO THE MOTOR POOL...
MOVE THOSE JEEPS BEFORE THIS LOT BLOWS!
IT'S TIME TO ACT AS THE BLACK PANTHER!

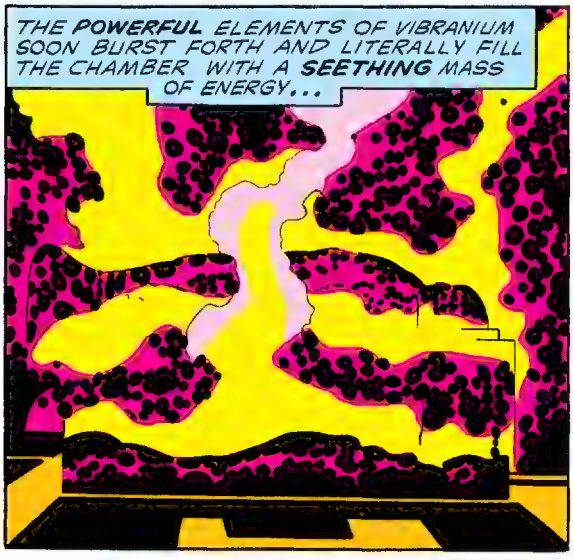

A MOMENT LATER...
MY TRANSPORTATION HAS ARRIVED ON SCHEDULE!
PRODUCTION WILL BE HELD UP FOR ALMOST A MONTH! WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT?

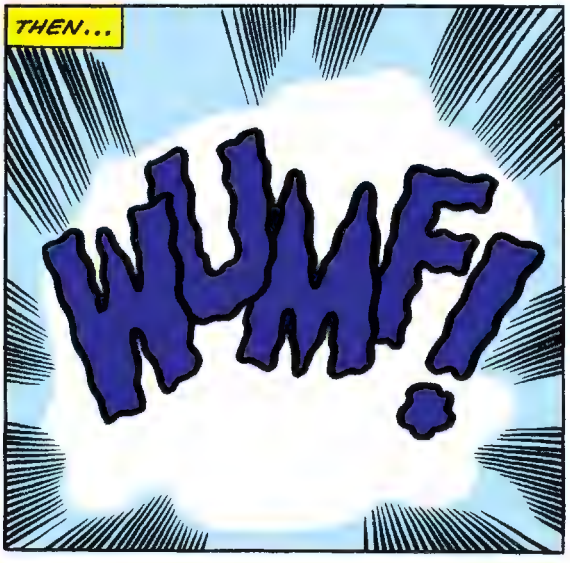
I AM, GENTLEMEN! YOU HAPPEN TO BE SITTING IN THE VEHICLE I'VE CHOSEN FOR MY PERSONAL USE!
IT'S ONE OF THE ACTORS! HE'S BEEN DRIVEN BANANAS!

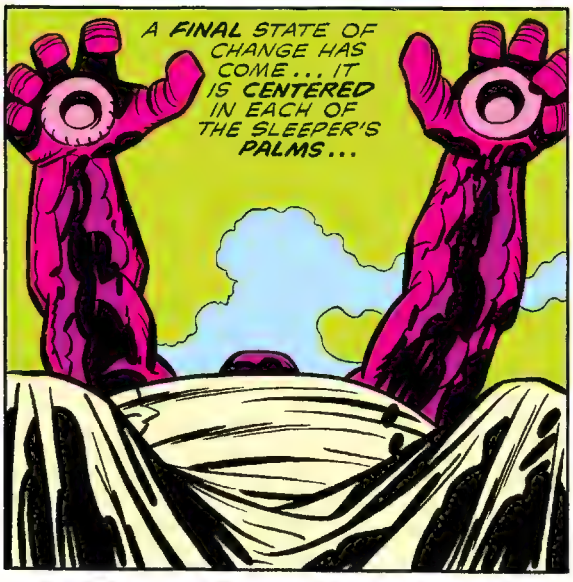
NO, I'M SIMPLY A MAN IN A HURRY!
THOSE MOVIE PEOPLE CAN SUSTAIN A MOMENTARY SETBACK IN THEIR SCHEDULE, BUT, MY LIFE IS A VERY DIFFERENT MATTER! IT CAN'T BE SPENT IN ANSWERING ENDLESS QUESTIONS!
MY PATIENCE WITH A CONSPIRING FATE HAS FINALLY REACHED THE VANISHING POINT!
GERARD MUST BE CONTACTING THE AUTHORITIES THIS VERY MOMENT, BUT IT WILL TAKE AN ARMY DIVISION TO STOP ME FROM REACHING WAKANDA TERRITORY...
AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
I SAY DESTROY HIM BEFORE HE REGAINS HIS SENSES!
YOU FORGET THAT I'M A DOCTOR, N'GASSI! I CANNOT TAKE A LIFE!
LET HIM LIVE-- AND WE ALL DIE!
JIRU MERELY VOICES MY OWN FEARS! THIS IS NOT A COMMON PATIENT-- BUT AN UNKNOWN FORCE OF MOUNTING POWER!
THAT'S TRUE... THERE ARE DEFINITE SIGNS OF A RISING ENERGY LEVEL!
DON'T YOU SEE? JAKARRA IS NO LONGER HUMAN!
WE MUST DO WHAT THE ANCIENT RECORDS HAVE TAUGHT US IN SUCH CASES! TIME GROWS SHORT, JOSHUA ITOBO!
DESTROY HIM, NOW!
THAT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION! HOWEVER-- THERE MAY BE A METHOD OF REVERSING THE VIBRANIUM EFFECT!


MIGHTY T'CHALLA WOULD NEVER HAVE STAKED THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE ON SUCH A FOOLISH HOPE!
I BELIEVE YOU'RE OVERDRAMATIZING THE RISKS, N'GASSI! I'LL KEEP HIM UNDER CONTROL UNTIL A CURE IS FOUND.
WE MUST PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE DISASTER!


BUT, IT IS THE STRANGE SILENT FORM ON THE TABLE WHICH HOLDS THE KEY TO THE RIGHT ANSWER. IT STILL LIES MOTIONLESS WHEN THE GROUP IS GONE...YET WITHIN IT CHURNS ACTIVITY OF AN ALIEN ORDER...

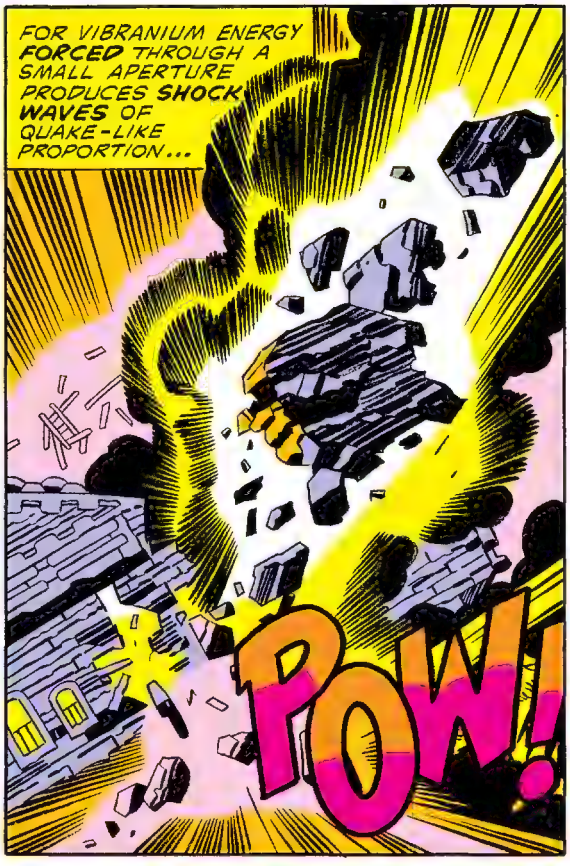

THE POWERFUL ELEMENTS OF VIBRANIUM SOON BURST FORTH AND LITERALLY FILL THE CHAMBER WITH A SEETHING MASS OF ENERGY...


THEN...
WUMF!

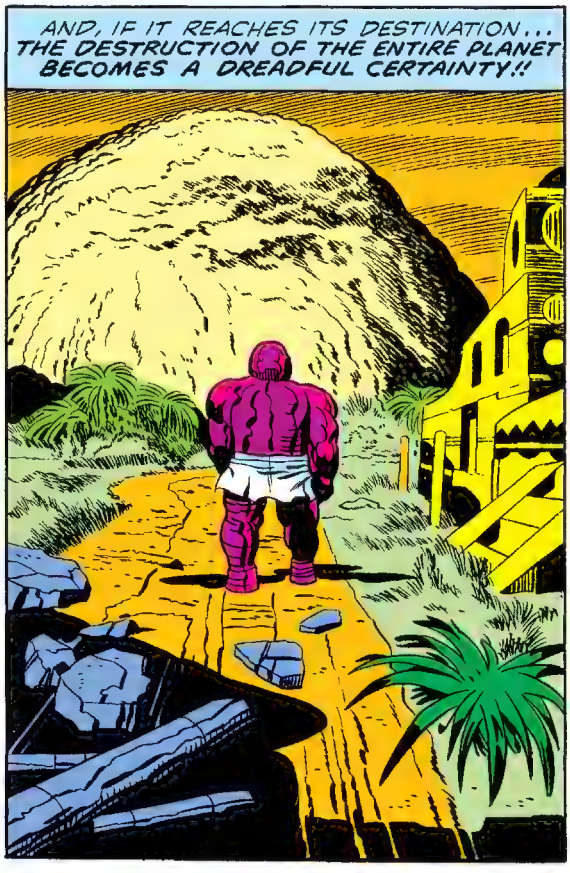

A FINAL STATE OF CHANGE HAS COME... IT IS CENTERED IN EACH OF THE SLEEPER'S PALMS...

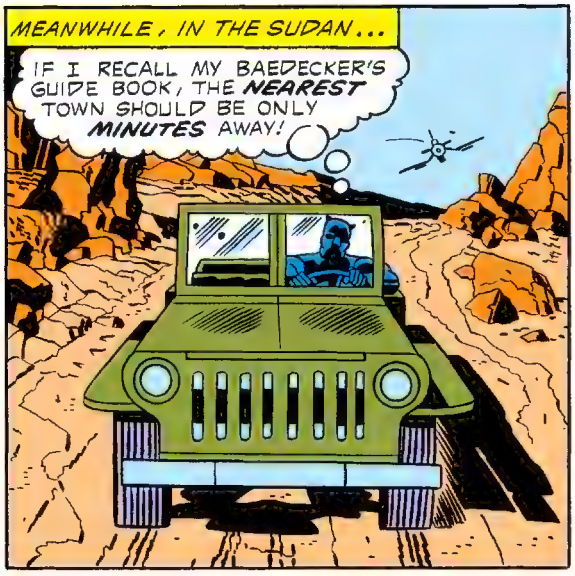
WHEN HE RISES, HE CAN NO LONGER REMEMBER HIS FORMER IDENTITY... HE IS NOW TOTALLY--SOMETHING ELSE...

BUT LIKE ANY CREATURE AWARE OF ITS NATURAL POWERS, HE USES THIS NEW ONE WITH DEVASTATING EFFECT...
TSSST!

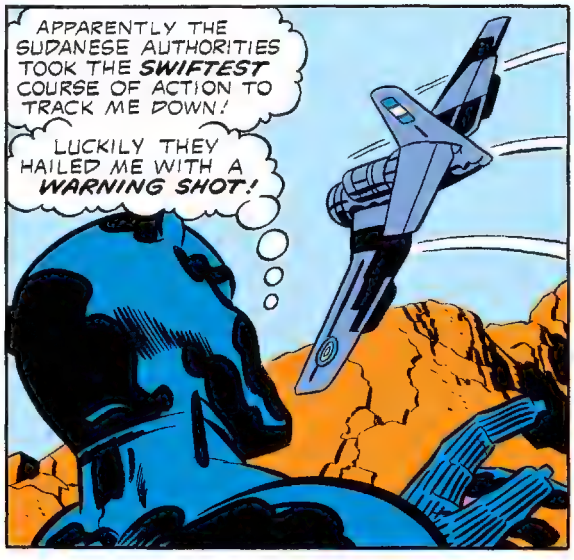

FOR VIBRANIUM ENERGY FORCED THROUGH A SMALL APERTURE PRODUCES SHOCK WAVES OF QUAKE-LIKE PROPORTION...
POW!

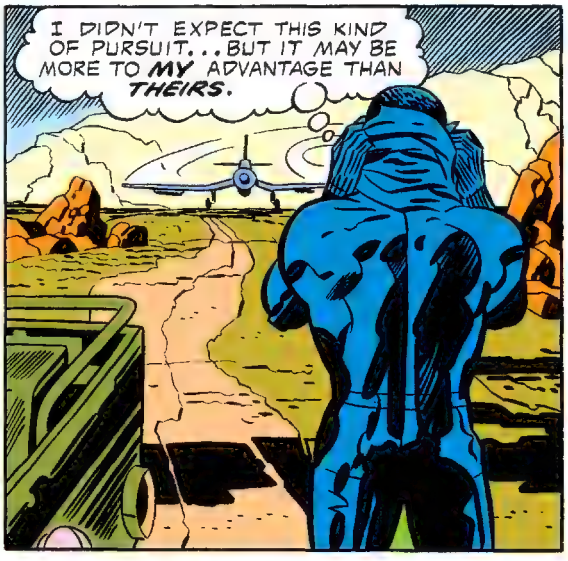
THE CREATURE THAT WAS JAKARRA THEN FOLLOWS AN INSTINCT IT CANNOT DENY. FACING FREEDOM, IT MOVES TOWARD THE GREAT WAKANDA VIBRANIUM MOUND!


AND, IF IT REACHES ITS DESTINATION... THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENTIRE PLANET BECOMES A DREADFUL CERTAINTY!!

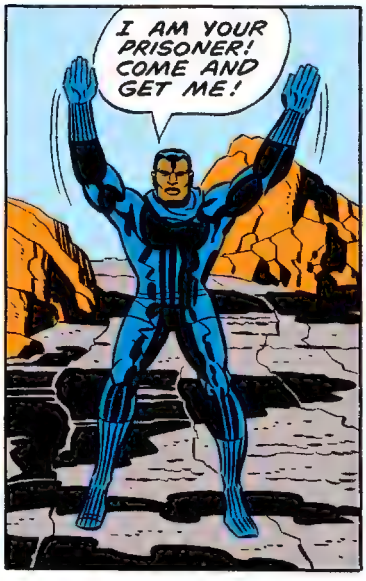

MEANWHILE, IN THE SUDAN...
IF I RECALL MY BAEDECKER'S GUIDE BOOK, THE NEAREST TOWN SHOULD BE ONLY MINUTES AWAY!

BRAATATATAT!
MACHINE GUNS!


APPARENTLY THE SUDANESE AUTHORITIES TOOK THE SWIFTEST COURSE OF ACTION TO TRACK ME DOWN!
LUCKILY THEY HAILED ME WITH A WARNING SHOT!


I DIDN'T EXPECT THIS KIND OF PURSUIT...BUT IT MAY BE MORE TO MY ADVANTAGE THAN THEIRS.

THAT'S A MILITARY PLANE--WITH LOTS OF POWER AND RANGE! I'D BE A FOOL IF I DIDN'T SURRENDER TO OPPORTUNITY!


I AM YOUR PRISONER! COME AND GET ME!

NEXT: T'CHALLA COMES HOME--TOO LATE!
THIS WORLD SHALL DIE

BLACK PANTHER™
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THE PANTHER RETURNS TO HIS JUNGLE HOME!
BLACK PANTHER™
©1978 MARVEL COMICS GROUP.
WHILE THE PLANET TREMBLES, THE PANTHER FACES THE RADIOACTIVE MIGHT OF--JAKARRA!
THIS WORLD SHALL DIE!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee Presents: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN, AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • INKED & LETTERED BY **MIKE ROYER** • COLORED BY **ROGER SLIFER** • DISPOSITION BY **ARCHIE GOODWIN**

AND, IT IS WRITTEN IN THE SACRED RECORDS OF THE WAKANDAS, THAT THERE WILL COME A DAY WHEN A SELF-DEFILED CREATURE OF POWER SHALL ENTER THE GREAT VIBRANIUM MOUND AND CAUSE A NEVER-ENDING SOUND OF DOOM! ON THAT DAY--
THIS WORLD SHALL DIE!
BLAM!
SURRENDER TO US! YOU'RE OUR PRISONER!
THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN, GENTLEMEN--
IF THE SUDANESE AUTHORITIES WANT ME FOR QUESTIONING, THEY'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR A MORE FAVORABLE TIME!
KRAK!
DON'T BE A FOOL! WE CAN SHOOT YOU FOR RESISTING ARREST!
POW!

C-856

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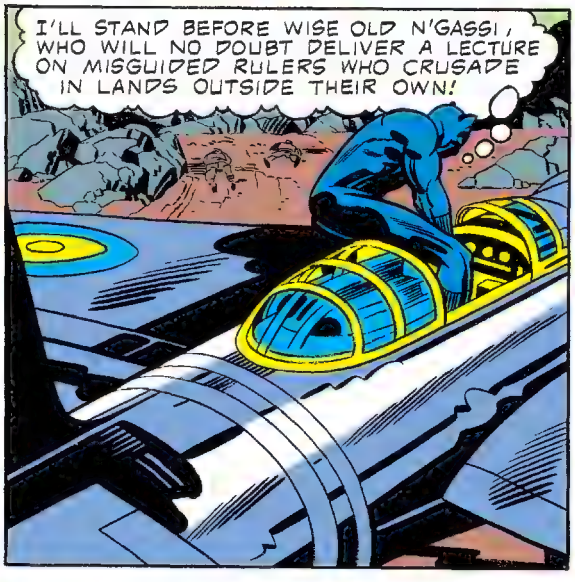
T'CHALLA, RULER OF THE PANTHER CULT, IS IN NO MOOD TO TOLERATE DELAY. HE IS EAGER TO REACH HIS HOMELAND BY ANY MEANS AT HAND...
WAM!
CURSE YOU--! STAND FAST, I SAY!!
SORRY-- BUT I'VE GOT TO MOVE FASTER THAN I EVER HAVE BEFORE!
THIS MAY BE THE LAST CHANCE I'LL GET TO SOLVE MY TRAVEL PROBLEM-- AND TO MISS IT IS UNTHINK-ABLE!
ZOK!
A BULLET CAN STILL SLOW YOU DOWN, STRANGER!
NEVER--!
IT CAN ALSO TAKE CARE OF YOUR TRAVEL PROBLEM!
YOU'RE GOING TO PRISON!
THEN, TRAVEL TO THE GRAVE! --AND TROUBLE US NO MORE!
BAM! BAM! BAM!
TO SHOOT THE BLACK PANTHER IS TO STRIKE AT THE WIND!
TLUNG!
BYOW!

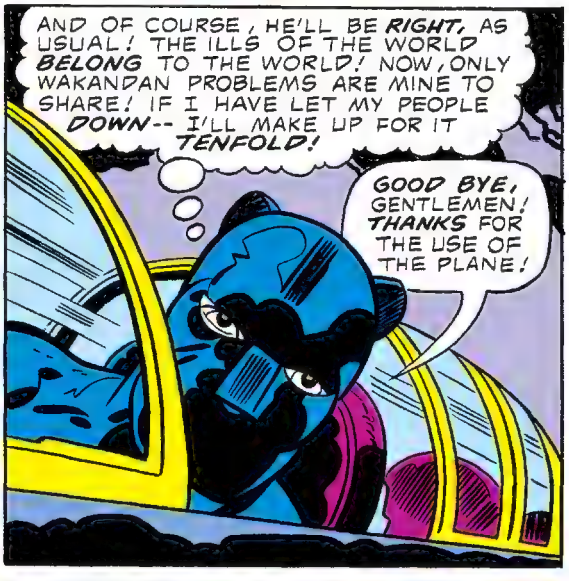
ONCE HIS RITUAL MASK IS DONNED IN BATTLE, T'CHALLA BECOMES A RAGING FURY.
--TO BE CAUGHT BY THE PANTHER IS TO STRUGGLE WITHOUT HOPE!

--AND NOW THAT I CAN FINALLY SETTLE THIS ISSUE, I SHALL DO IT QUICKLY, MERCIFULLY, AND WITHOUT REGRET!
SLEEP WELL, BIRD-MAN!

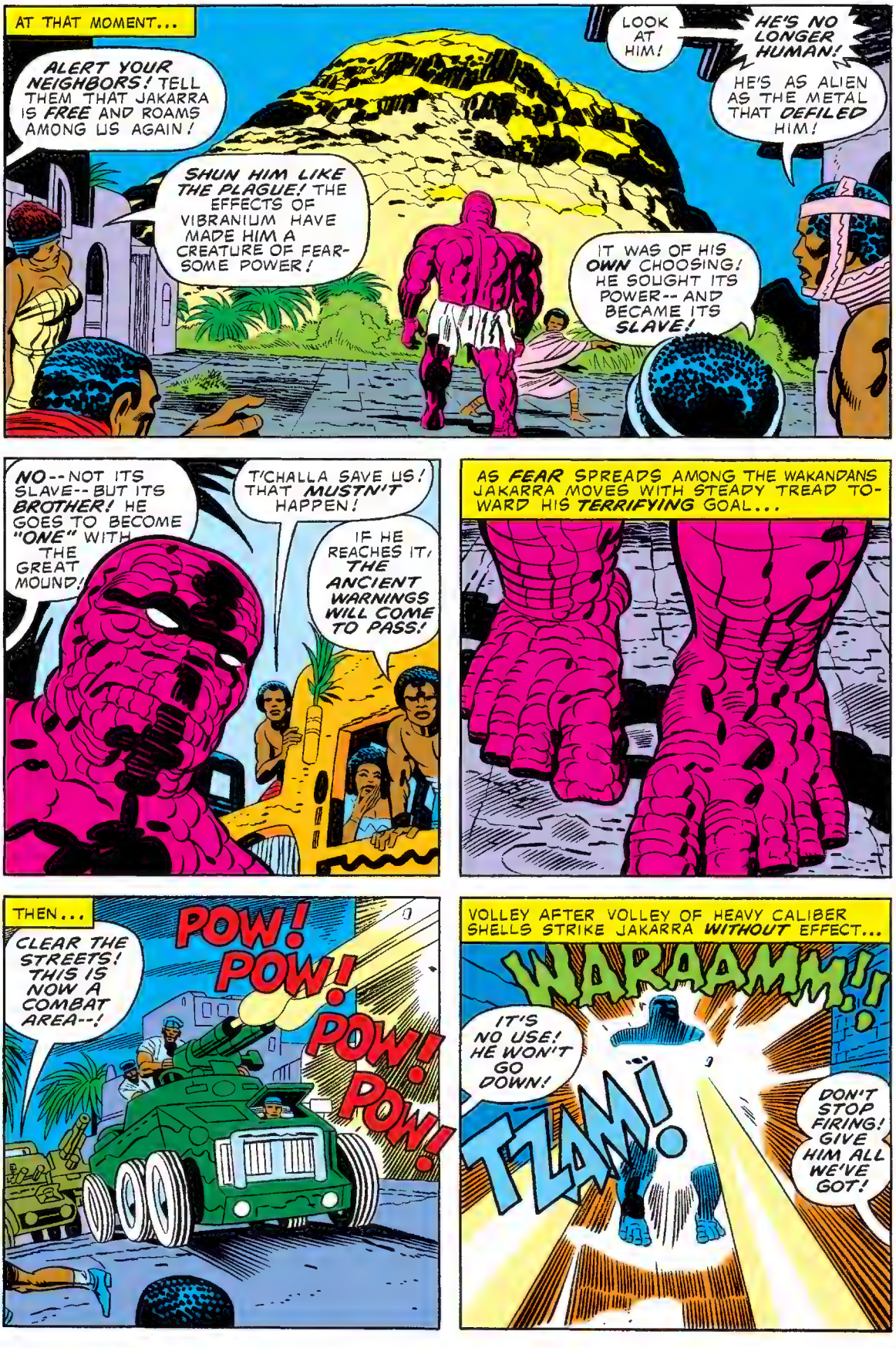
KARAAK!!

THOSE TWO WILL BLISTER THE AIR WITH SOME CHOICE PHRASES WHEN THEY AWAKEN!
BUT I'LL BE WELL OUT OF EAR-SHOT WHEN THAT MOMENT COMES!


I'LL STAND BEFORE WISE OLD N'GASSI, WHO WILL NO DOUBT DELIVER A LECTURE ON MISGUIDED RULERS WHO CRUSADE IN LANDS OUTSIDE THEIR OWN!

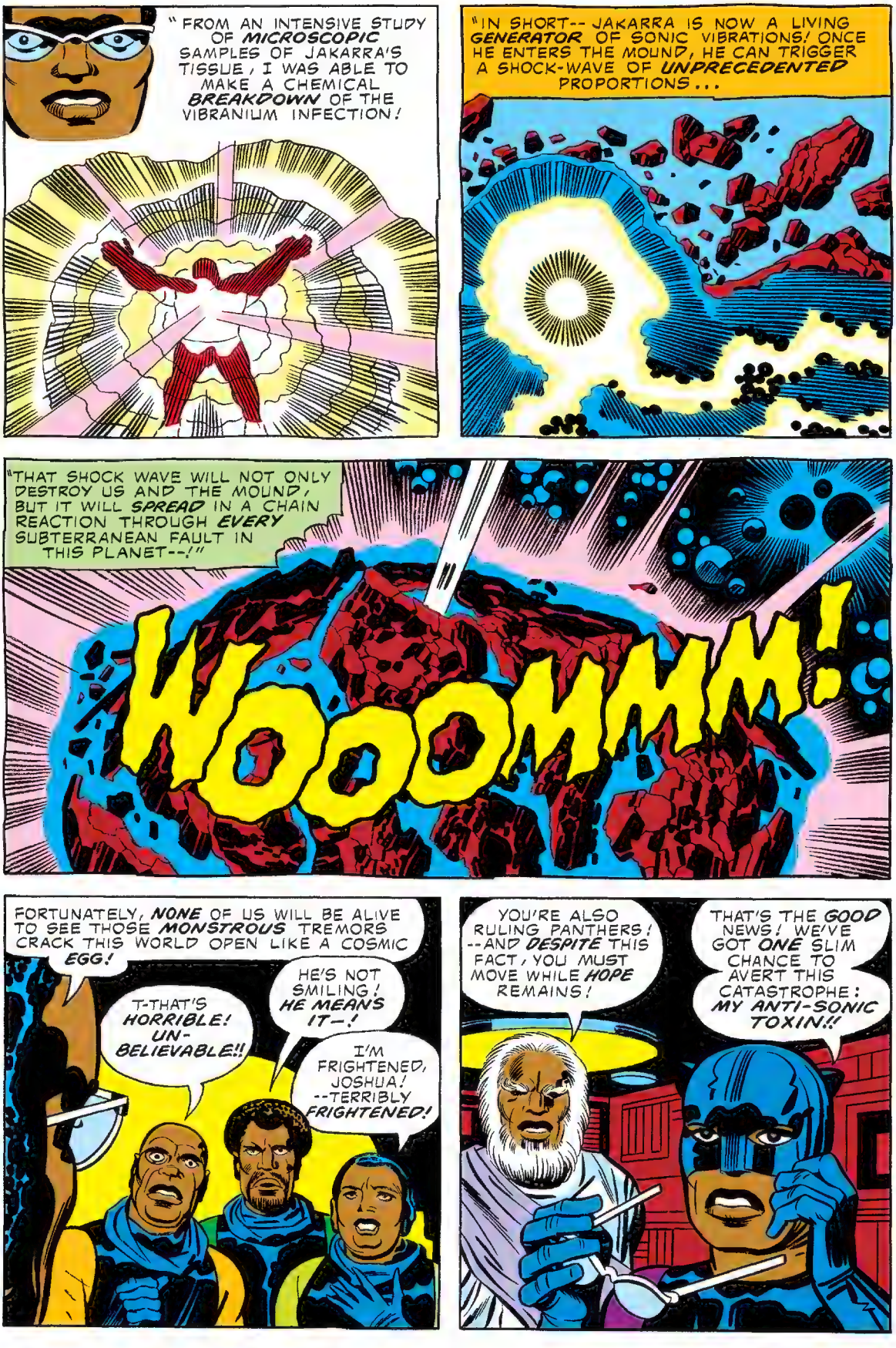

AND OF COURSE, HE'LL BE RIGHT, AS USUAL! THE ILLS OF THE WORLD BELONG TO THE WORLD! NOW, ONLY WAKANDAN PROBLEMS ARE MINE TO SHARE! IF I HAVE LET MY PEOPLE DOWN-- I'LL MAKE UP FOR IT TENFOLD!
GOOD BYE, GENTLEMEN! THANKS FOR THE USE OF THE PLANE!

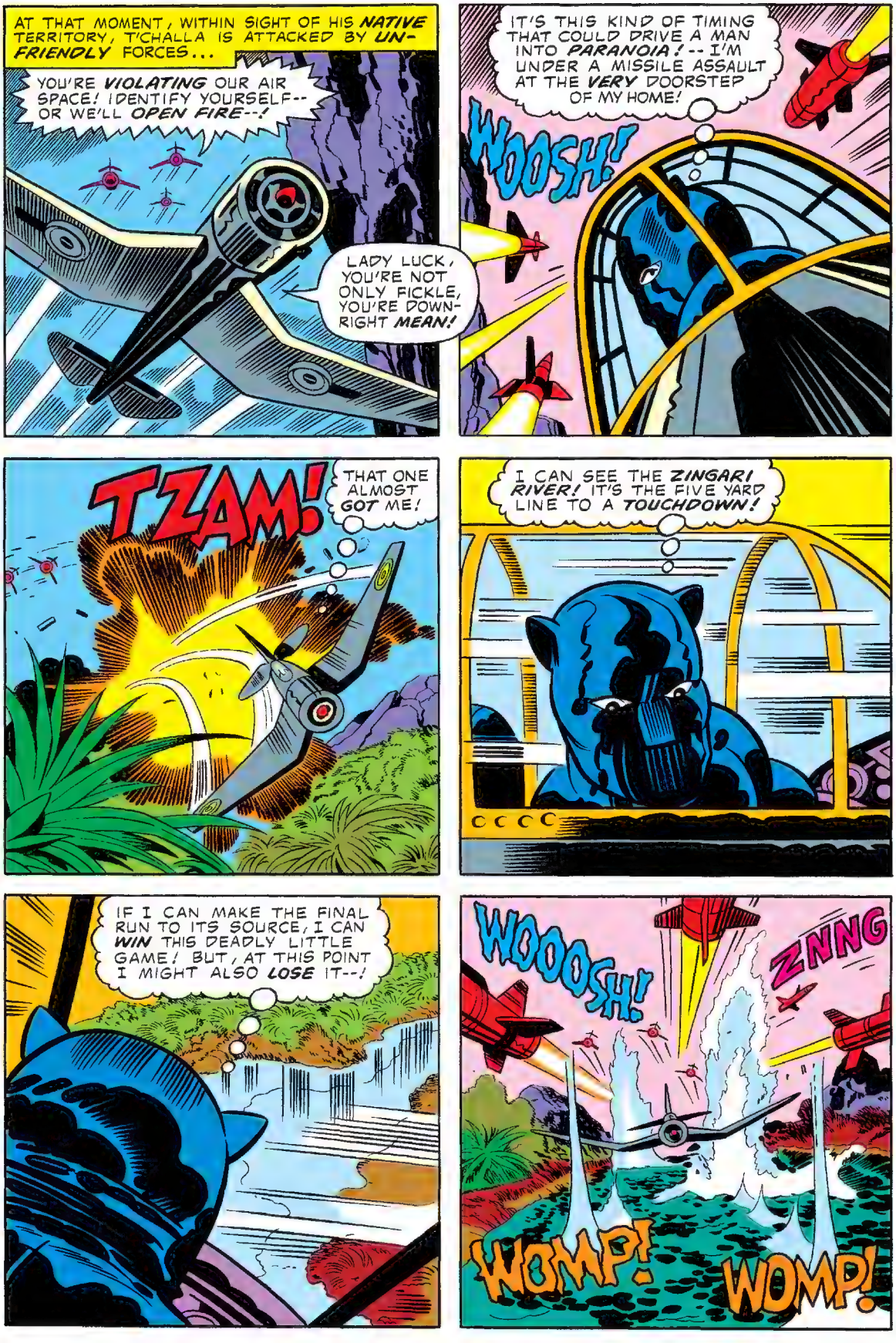
MOMENTS LATER...
HEADING: DUE SOUTH! AIR MILES: THREE HUNDRED--TIME OF ARRIVAL: PERHAPS FORTY MINUTES--IF I DON'T RUN INTO UNEXPECTED OPPOSITION!
RRRRRRR!
STAND BY ME, LADY LUCK! A MAN NEEDS YOU MOST WHEN THE ROAD AHEAD LOOKS CLEAR!
MEANWHILE, IN THE HIDDEN DOMAIN OF THE PANTHER CULT...
HE'S GONE! JAKARRA'S BROKEN OUT OF HIS FORTIFIED CHAMBER!
THE CURSED ONE HAS THE POWER OF FIFTY MEN!
I TRIED TO WARN THE RULING FAMILY! BUT, THEY WOULDN'T LISTEN!
THEIR DISDAIN FOR THE OLD WAYS HAVE OPENED THE DOOR TO DISASTER! I PRAY THAT WE HAVE THE FORCE TO STOP THIS DEMON!
THE MILITIA WILL DO ITS BEST!
WE SHOULD HAVE DISOBEYED THE RULING FAMILY AND DESTROYED THAT THING WHILE IT WAS IN OUR HANDS! WE SHOULD HAVE DESTROYED IT--!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR HINDSIGHT, JIRU!
IN FACT, IT MAY BE TOO LATE FOR ANY KIND OF ACTION--BUT WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN WITH COOL HEADS AND STOUT HEARTS!

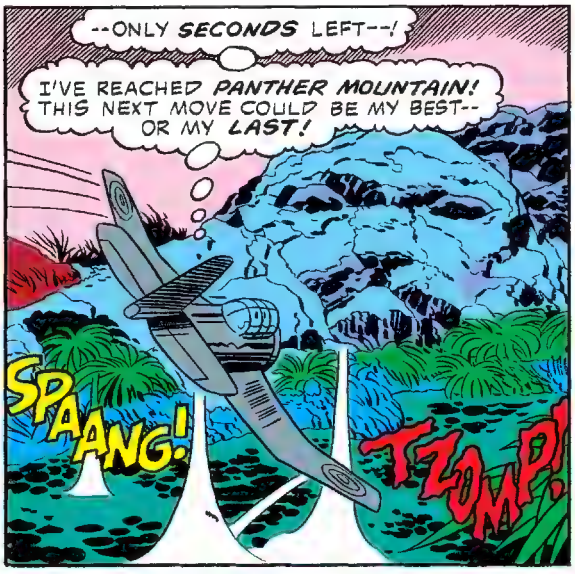

AT THAT MOMENT...
ALERT YOUR NEIGHBORS! TELL THEM THAT JAKARRA IS FREE AND ROAMS AMONG US AGAIN!
SHUN HIM LIKE THE PLAGUE! THE EFFECTS OF VIBRANIUM HAVE MADE HIM A CREATURE OF FEARSOME POWER!
LOOK AT HIM!
HE'S NO LONGER HUMAN!
HE'S AS ALIEN AS THE METAL THAT DEFILED HIM!
IT WAS OF HIS OWN CHOOSING! HE SOUGHT ITS POWER-- AND BECAME ITS SLAVE!
NO--NOT ITS SLAVE--BUT ITS BROTHER! HE GOES TO BECOME "ONE" WITH THE GREAT MOUND!
T'CHALLA SAVE US! THAT MUSTN'T HAPPEN!
IF HE REACHES IT, THE ANCIENT WARNINGS WILL COME TO PASS!
AS FEAR SPREADS AMONG THE WAKANDANS JAKARRA MOVES WITH STEADY TREAD TOWARD HIS TERRIFYING GOAL...
THEN...
CLEAR THE STREETS! THIS IS NOW A COMBAT AREA--!
POW! POW! POW! POW!
VOLLEY AFTER VOLLEY OF HEAVY CALIBER SHELLS STRIKE JAKARRA WITHOUT EFFECT...
WARAAMM!!
IT'S NO USE! HE WON'T GO DOWN!
TZAM!
DON'T STOP FIRING! GIVE HIM ALL WE'VE GOT!

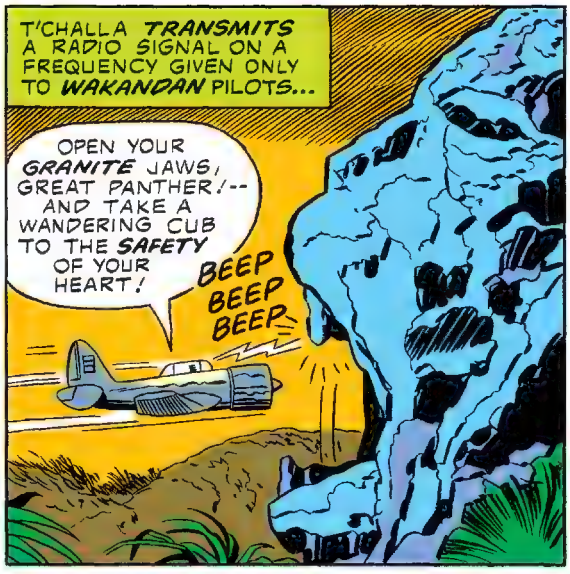
THE VIBRANIUM CHANGE HAS GIVEN JAKARRA A NEW ADVANTAGE! HE'S *INVULNERABLE* TO OUR WEAPONS!
HIS PALMS ARE *GLOWING* LIKE WHITE *HOT* COALS!
AND THAT'S NOT THE *ONLY* CHANGE! *WATCH HIS HANDS!*
BY THE SACRED PANTHER--!! *ABANDON YOUR CARS!*
SSSS
SSSSSS
GUNS AND ARMOR WITHER IN CONTACT WITH THE *UNLEASHED* INFERNO...
HOW CAN WE STOP HIM? HE'S A *LIVING* FLAME-THROWER!
MEANWHILE, IN AN UPPER FLOOR OF THE WAKANDAN ADMINISTRATION BUILDING...
WELL, *JOSHUA M'TOBO!* YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE STREETS! ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE *RESULTS* OF YOUR DECISION?
I *COULDN'T* PREDICT THIS, N'GASSI...I COULDN'T!
WHEN I GAVE THE ORDER TO ISOLATE JAKARRA FOR STUDY, I *KNEW* THERE WERE RISKS INVOLVED--
--BUT TO *KILL* HIM WOULD'VE *VIOLATED* MY OATH AS A DOCTOR!
DID YOU ALSO CONSIDER YOUR *DUTY* AS A MEMBER OF THE *RULING* FAMILY?

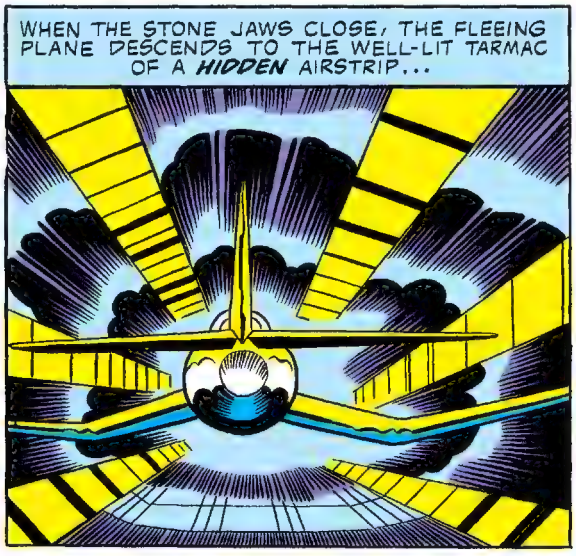
DID YOU THINK OF THE SAFETY OF YOUR PEOPLE?-- OF THE WORLD!?
YES! I SEARCHED FOR ANOTHER OPTION-- AND FOUND-- THIS!
THIS IS THE ANSWER TO THE TERROR, N'GASSI! ITS DISCOVERY WAS UNBELIEVABLY SIMPLE! BUT, IT WORKS! I'LL STAKE MY LIFE ON IT!
YOUR LIFE AMONG MANY OTHERS, JOSHUA!
IS THIS A TIME FOR DISCUSSING SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH?
DON'T YOU TWO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON?!
TAKE OFF THAT LABORATORY SMOCK-- WE'VE GOT A JOB TO DO!
HE'S WELL AWARE OF THAT, KHANATA!
IN FACT, IT'S NEVER LEFT MY THOUGHTS!
THE RULING FAMILY DEMANDS AN EXPLANATION, JOSHUA! HAVE YOU LEARNED SOMETHING WE SHOULD KNOW?
SOMETHING GOOD... SOMETHING VERY BAD!
PERHAPS WE'D BETTER HEAR THE BAD NEWS FIRST!
CERTAINLY! IT SEEMS THAT ALL THE THINGS WE MODERN PANTHERS REGARD AS OLD WIVES TALES ARE--
HE MEANS THE ANCIENT "DOOM" PROPHECIES CAN COME TRUE!

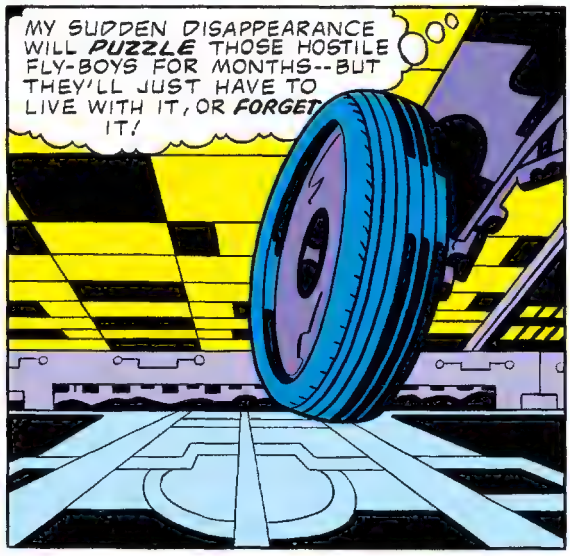

"FROM AN INTENSIVE STUDY OF MICROSCOPIC SAMPLES OF JAKARRA'S TISSUE, I WAS ABLE TO MAKE A CHEMICAL BREAKDOWN OF THE VIBRANIUM INFECTION!
"IN SHORT-- JAKARRA IS NOW A LIVING GENERATOR OF SONIC VIBRATIONS! ONCE HE ENTERS THE MOUND, HE CAN TRIGGER A SHOCK-WAVE OF UNPRECEDENTED PROPORTIONS...
"THAT SHOCK WAVE WILL NOT ONLY DESTROY US AND THE MOUND, BUT IT WILL SPREAD IN A CHAIN REACTION THROUGH EVERY SUBTERRANEAN FAULT IN THIS PLANET--!"
WOOOMMM!
FORTUNATELY, NONE OF US WILL BE ALIVE TO SEE THOSE MONSTROUS TREMORS CRACK THIS WORLD OPEN LIKE A COSMIC EGG!
T-THAT'S HORRIBLE! UN-BELIEVABLE!!
HE'S NOT SMILING! HE MEANS IT--!
I'M FRIGHTENED, JOSHUA! --TERRIBLY FRIGHTENED!
YOU'RE ALSO RULING PANTHERS! --AND DESPITE THIS FACT, YOU MUST MOVE WHILE HOPE REMAINS!
THAT'S THE GOOD NEWS! WE'VE GOT ONE SLIM CHANCE TO AVERT THIS CATASTROPHE: MY ANTI-SONIC TOXIN!!

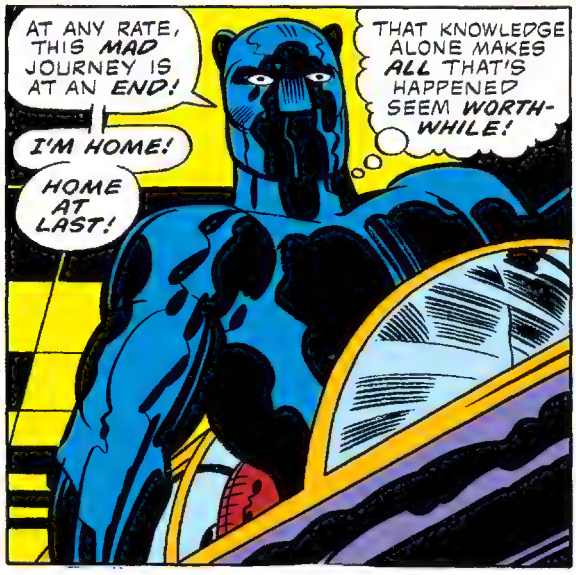

AT THAT MOMENT, WITHIN SIGHT OF HIS NATIVE TERRITORY, T'CHALLA IS ATTACKED BY UN-FRIENDLY FORCES...
YOU'RE VIOLATING OUR AIR SPACE! IDENTIFY YOURSELF--OR WE'LL OPEN FIRE--!
LADY LUCK, YOU'RE NOT ONLY FICKLE, YOU'RE DOWN-RIGHT MEAN!
IT'S THIS KIND OF TIMING THAT COULD DRIVE A MAN INTO PARANOIA! -- I'M UNDER A MISSILE ASSAULT AT THE VERY DOORSTEP OF MY HOME!
WOOSH!
TZAM!
THAT ONE ALMOST GOT ME!
I CAN SEE THE ZINGARI RIVER! IT'S THE FIVE YARD LINE TO A TOUCHDOWN!
IF I CAN MAKE THE FINAL RUN TO ITS SOURCE, I CAN WIN THIS DEADLY LITTLE GAME! BUT, AT THIS POINT I MIGHT ALSO LOSE IT--!
WOOOSH!
ZNNG
WOMP!
WOMP!

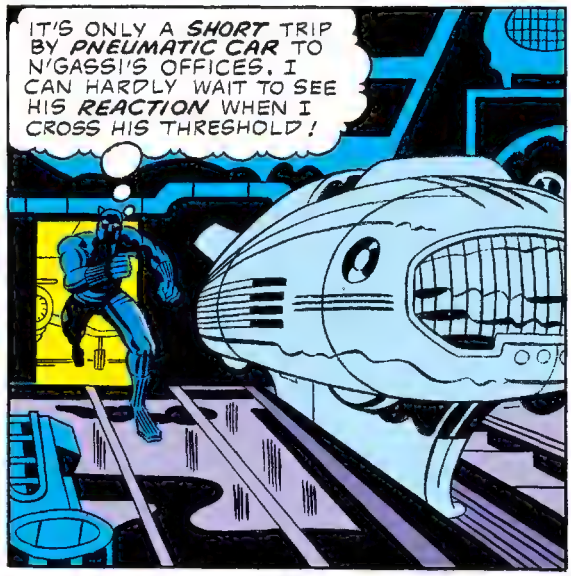

--ONLY SECONDS LEFT--!
I'VE REACHED PANTHER MOUNTAIN! THIS NEXT MOVE COULD BE MY BEST-- OR MY LAST!
SPAANG!
TZOMP!


T'CHALLA TRANSMITS A RADIO SIGNAL ON A FREQUENCY GIVEN ONLY TO WAKANDAN PILOTS...
OPEN YOUR GRANITE JAWS, GREAT PANTHER!-- AND TAKE A WANDERING CUB TO THE SAFETY OF YOUR HEART!
BEEP BEEP BEEP

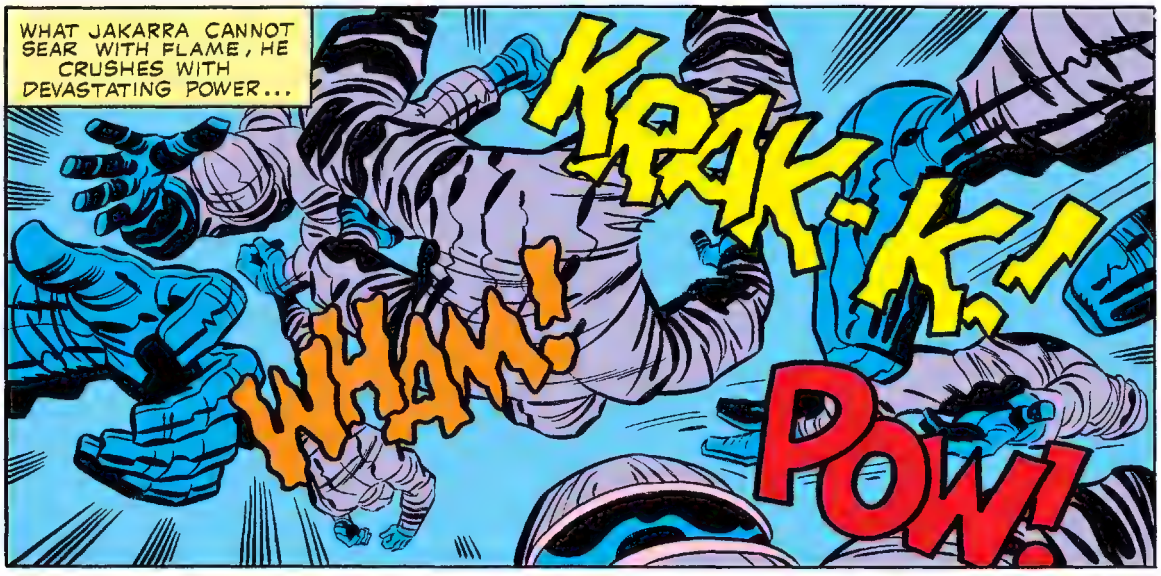

WHEN THE STONE JAWS CLOSE, THE FLEEING PLANE DESCENDS TO THE WELL-LIT TARMAC OF A HIDDEN AIRSTRIP...


MY SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE WILL PUZZLE THOSE HOSTILE FLY-BOYS FOR MONTHS--BUT THEY'LL JUST HAVE TO LIVE WITH IT, OR FORGET IT!

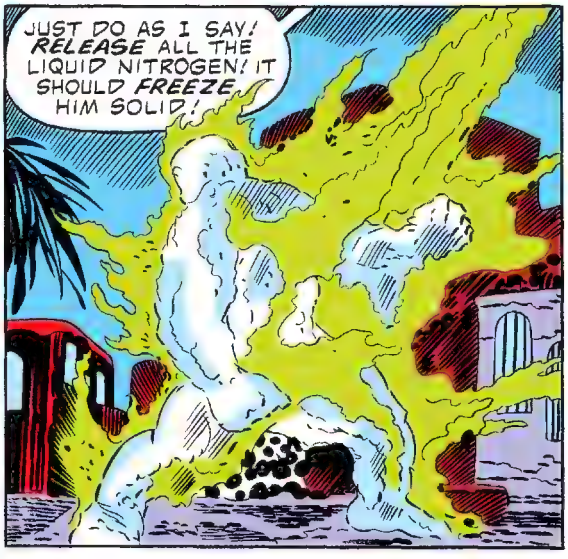

AT ANY RATE, THIS MAD JOURNEY IS AT AN END!
I'M HOME!
HOME AT LAST!
THAT KNOWLEDGE ALONE MAKES ALL THAT'S HAPPENED SEEM WORTH-WHILE!

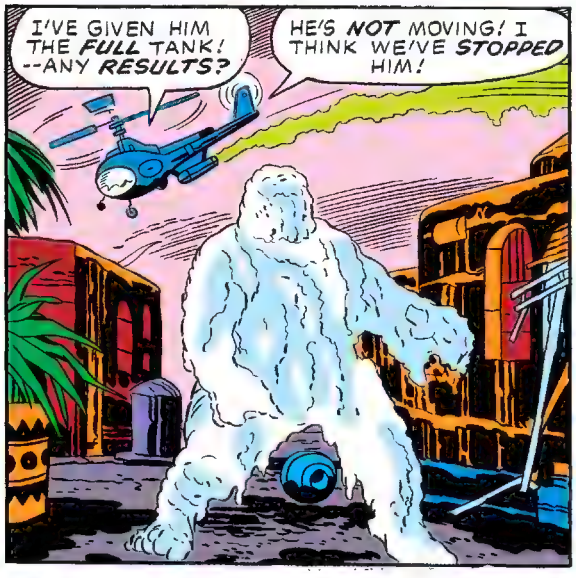

IT'S ONLY A SHORT TRIP BY PNEUMATIC CAR TO N'GASSI'S OFFICES. I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE HIS REACTION WHEN I CROSS HIS THRESHOLD!

IF I KNOW THAT OLD LEOPARD, HE'S PROBABLY DIGGING AT THE ROOTS OF SOME PRESSING STATE CRISIS -- OR INVENTING ONE!
BUT, NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF TANGLED WEB HE'S CAUGHT IN, I SHALL WHIP HIM FROM IT AND TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY IN MY OWN TWO HANDS!
BUT T'CHALLA IS UNAWARE OF THE DESPERATE SITUATION THAT LIES BEFORE HIM...
KEEP MOVING! KEEP MOVING! THE MILITIA MUST HAVE ROOM TO MANEUVER!
THEY'LL NEVER STOP JAKARRA!
HURRY, CHILDREN! HE'S COMING THIS WAY!
THE BLACK PANTHER SHOULD BE HERE! WHERE IS HE WHEN HIS PEOPLE HAVE NEED OF HIS MIGHTY ARM!??
NEVER MIND THOSE CIVILIANS! GET THE SPECIAL SQUAD UP HERE ON THE DOUBLE!
THEY'RE READY! STAND BACK -- LET THEM DO THEIR JOB!
PROTECTED BY FLAME-PROOF CLOTHING, THE FRESH TROOPS CLOSE IN...
WE CAN'T MISS AT THIS DISTANCE! THESE SHELLS CAN PIERCE A BATTLE-SHIP!
--AND SINK IT!
ZUM


WHAT JAKARRA CANNOT SEAR WITH FLAME, HE CRUSHES WITH DEVASTATING POWER...
KRAK-K-K!
WHAM!
POW!

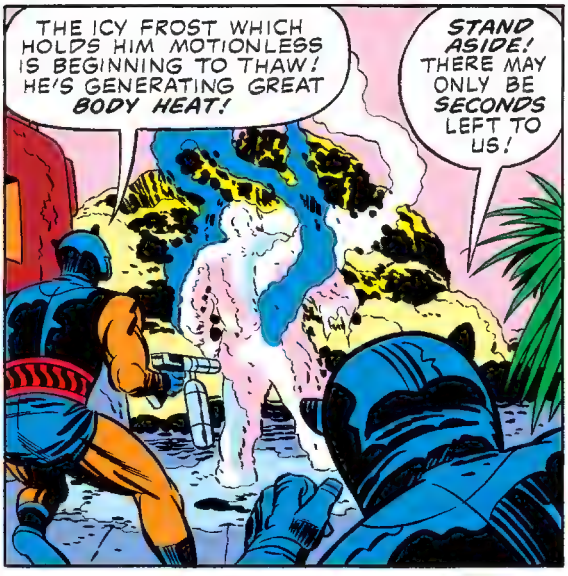
SUDDENLY, FROM ABOVE...
HE'S DIRECTLY BELOW US, JOSHUA! CAN YOU SUCCEED WHERE THE TROOPS HAVE FAILED?

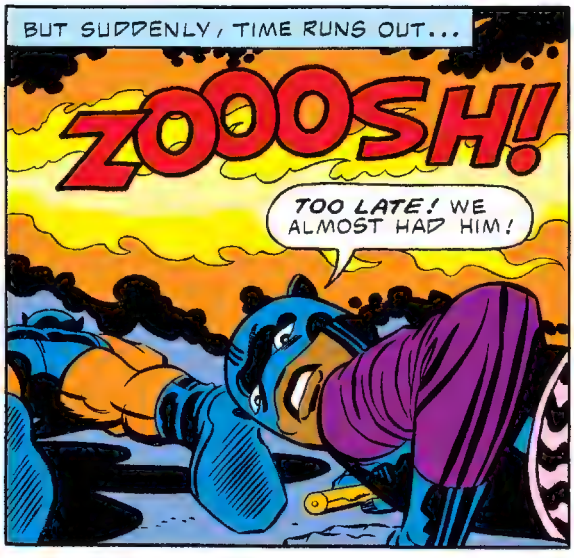

JUST DO AS I SAY! RELEASE ALL THE LIQUID NITROGEN! IT SHOULD FREEZE HIM SOLID!


I'VE GIVEN HIM THE FULL TANK! --ANY RESULTS?
HE'S NOT MOVING! I THINK WE'VE STOPPED HIM!

LAND THE 'COPTER, KHANATA! WHEN I'VE ADMINISTERED THIS SERUM, OUR WORK WILL BE DONE--!
IT'S YOUR WORK THAT WILL SAVE US, YOUNG ONE. THE TOXIN IS THE ONLY CHANCE WE HAVE!
IT WON'T BE EASY TO USE THAT INJECTOR ON JAKARRA!

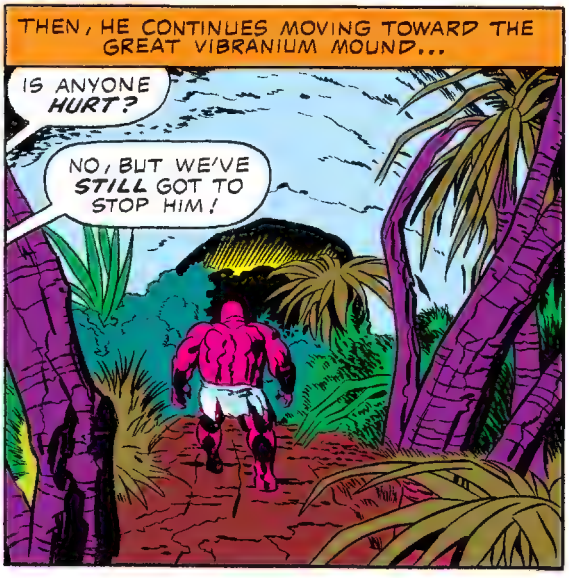
MY INJECTOR IS ALSO EQUIPPED WITH A SMALL BUT POWERFUL ELECTRICAL CHARGE WHICH SHOULD DRIVE THE TOXIN THROUGH HIS THICK HIDE!
LET US PRAY THAT IT CAN!
HURRY! IF IT IS TO BE DONE AT ALL, YOU MUST DO IT NOW--!

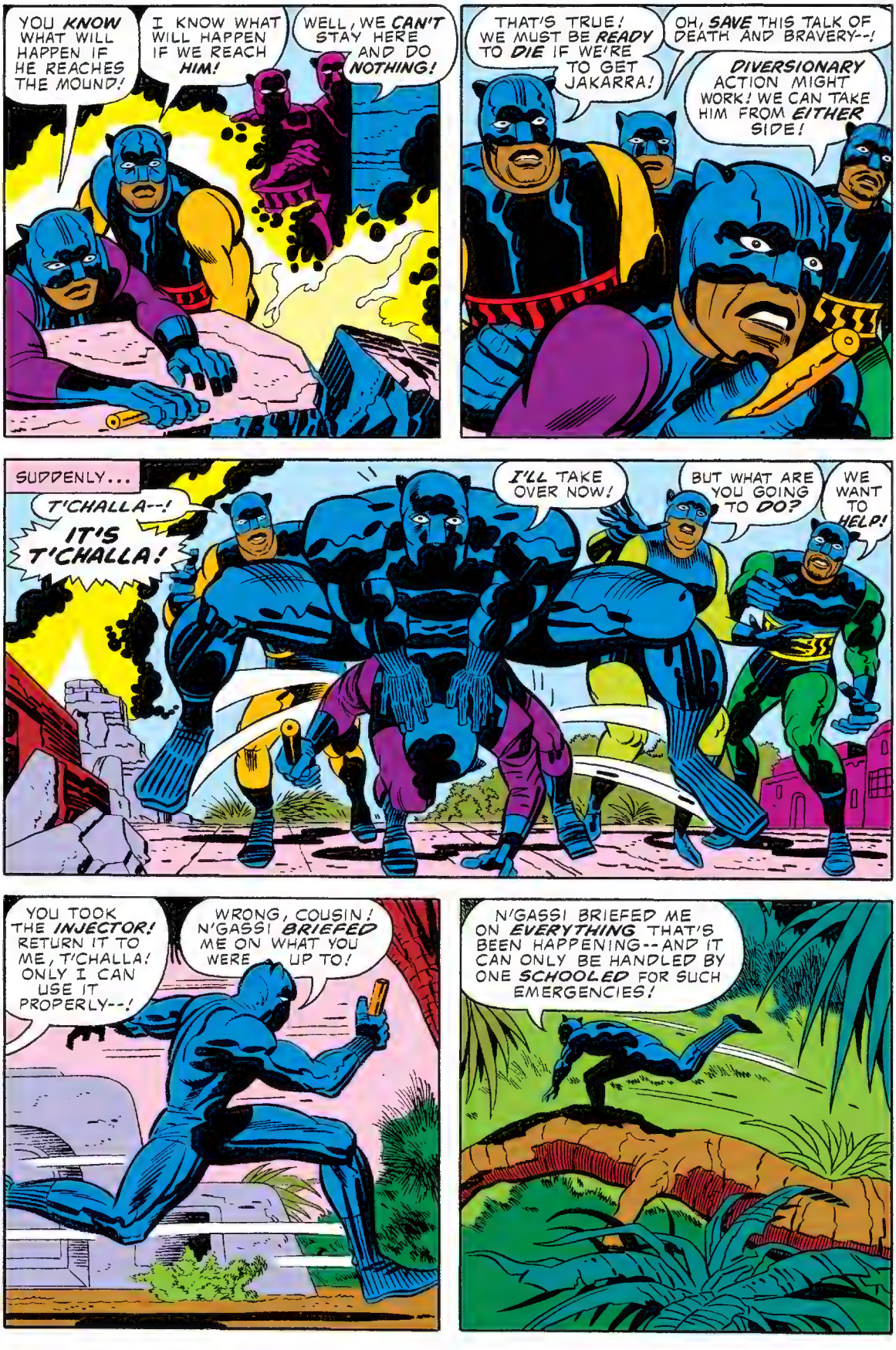

THE ICY FROST WHICH HOLDS HIM MOTIONLESS IS BEGINNING TO THAW! HE'S GENERATING GREAT BODY HEAT!
STAND ASIDE! THERE MAY ONLY BE SECONDS LEFT TO US!


BUT SUDDENLY, TIME RUNS OUT...
ZOOOSH!
TOO LATE! WE ALMOST HAD HIM!

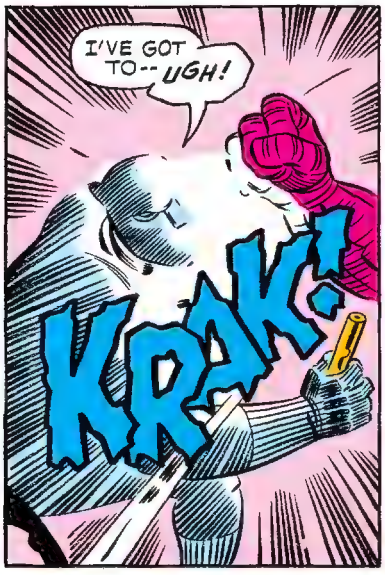
TAKE COVER BEHIND THIS FALLEN MASONRY! WE'LL HAVE TO DEVISE ANOTHER PLAN!
JAKARRA MAY NOT GIVE US TIME TO TALK! HE WANTS TO FRY US!
HE'S BECOME A VERITABLE FIRE-SPEWING DEMON!

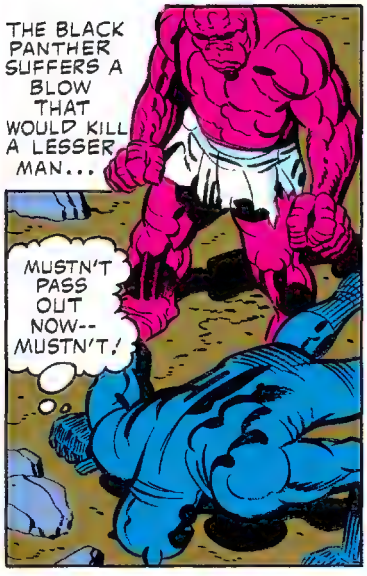
THE THING THAT WAS ONCE JAKARRA, HALF-BROTHER TO T'CHALLA HIMSELF, TURNS TO CAST ONE MORE FLAMING BOLT AT HIS PURSUERS...
LOOK OUT!
SSSS!

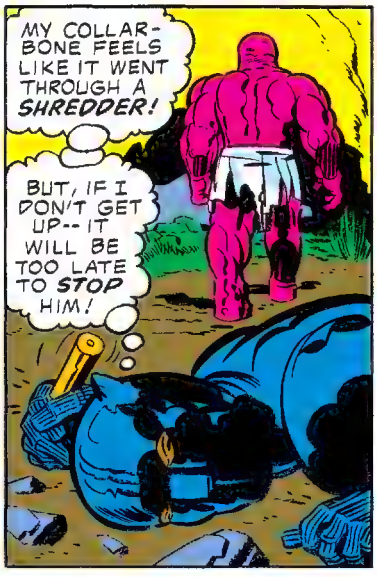

THEN, HE CONTINUES MOVING TOWARD THE GREAT VIBRANIUM MOUND...
IS ANYONE HURT?
NO, BUT WE'VE STILL GOT TO STOP HIM!

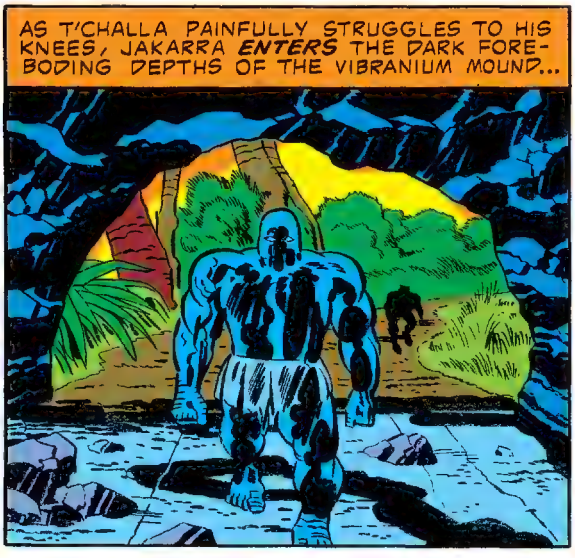

YOU KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF HE REACHES THE MOUND!
I KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE REACH HIM!
WELL, WE CAN'T STAY HERE AND DO NOTHING!
THAT'S TRUE! WE MUST BE READY TO DIE IF WE'RE TO GET JAKARRA!
OH, SAVE THIS TALK OF DEATH AND BRAVERY--!
DIVERSIONARY ACTION MIGHT WORK! WE CAN TAKE HIM FROM EITHER SIDE!
SUDDENLY...
T'CHALLA--!
IT'S T'CHALLA!
I'LL TAKE OVER NOW!
BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
WE WANT TO HELP!
YOU TOOK THE INJECTOR! RETURN IT TO ME, T'CHALLA! ONLY I CAN USE IT PROPERLY--!
WRONG, COUSIN! N'GASSI BRIEFED ME ON WHAT YOU WERE UP TO!
N'GASSI BRIEFED ME ON EVERYTHING THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING--AND IT CAN ONLY BE HANDLED BY ONE SCHOOLED FOR SUCH EMERGENCIES!

I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EARS WHEN I WAS TOLD ABOUT JAKARRA! BUT, THERE HE IS-- JUST AS N'GASSI DESCRIBED HIM!
STUPID AMBITIOUS FOOL! BY SEEKING POWER FROM VIBRANIUM, HE'S BECOME ITS INSTRUMENT FOR WORLD DISASTER!
NOW HE'S NO LONGER HUMAN! A DEADLY THING TO BE DEALT WITH AT GREAT RISK!
POW!
TAKE YOUR MEDICINE, JAKARRA! IF THIS DOESN'T DAMPEN THOSE FORCES INSIDE YOU, IT WON'T MATTER WHETHER YOU GET WELL OR NOT!
AT THAT MOMENT, THE POWERS WITHIN THE CREATURE BURST FORTH...
I COULDN'T HOLD HIM!
SSSS!!
WITH THAT KIND OF STRENGTH, HE CAN SMASH ME INTO PULP! BUT, I'VE GOT TO FINISH WHAT I STARTED!
CRASH!

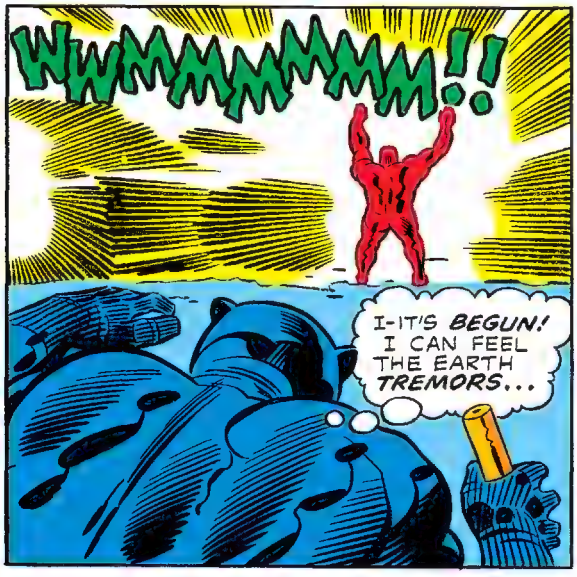

I'VE GOT TO-- UGH!
KRAK!


THE BLACK PANTHER SUFFERS A BLOW THAT WOULD KILL A LESSER MAN...
MUSTN'T PASS OUT NOW-- MUSTN'T!

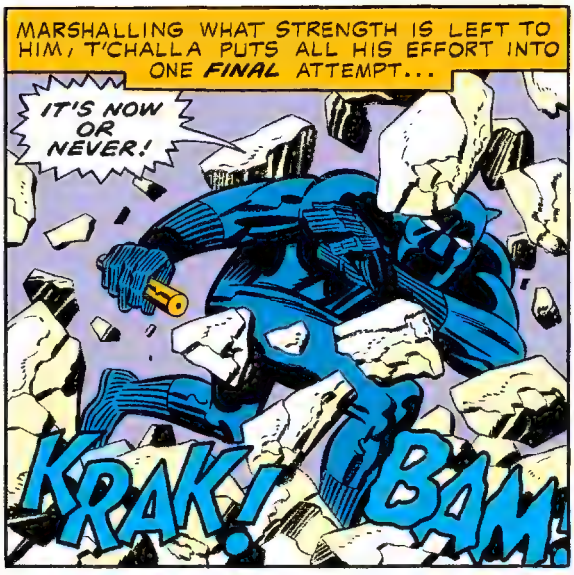

MY COLLAR-BONE FEELS LIKE IT WENT THROUGH A SHREDDER!
BUT, IF I DON'T GET UP-- IT WILL BE TOO LATE TO STOP HIM!


AS T'CHALLA PAINFULLY STRUGGLES TO HIS KNEES, JAKARRA ENTERS THE DARK FORE-BODING DEPTHS OF THE VIBRANIUM MOUND...

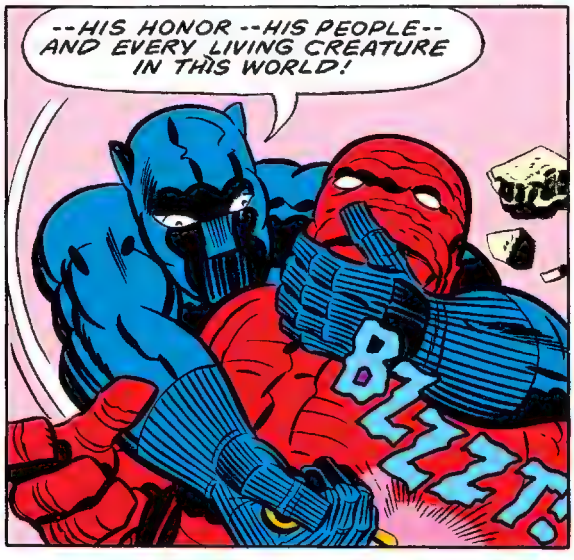
THE ALIEN ELEMENTS IN HIS STRUCTURE REACH OUT TO BLEND WITH THE FORCES IN THE MOUND AND GENERATE A STATE OF RESONANCE...

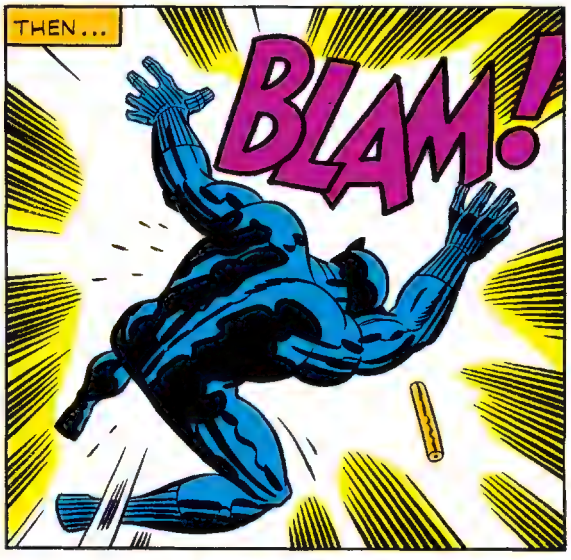

WWMMMMMM!!
I-IT'S BEGUN! I CAN FEEL THE EARTH TREMORS...

BARROOMM! WUM!
A GIANT SHOCK WAVE WILL COME NEXT!


MARSHALLING WHAT STRENGTH IS LEFT TO HIM, T'CHALLA PUTS ALL HIS EFFORT INTO ONE *FINAL* ATTEMPT...
IT'S NOW OR NEVER!
KRAK!
BAM!

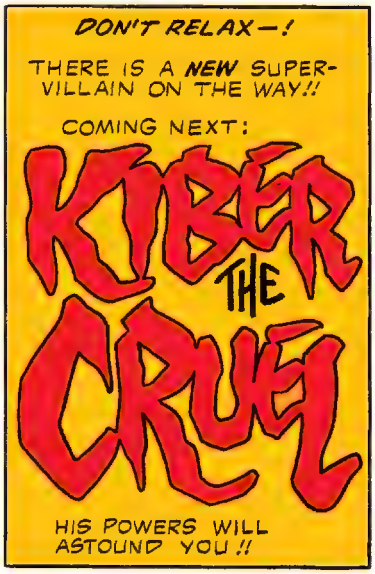
LET ONE WAKANDAN REDEEM WHAT ANOTHER WOULD DESTROY!


--HIS HONOR --HIS PEOPLE-- AND EVERY LIVING CREATURE IN THIS WORLD!
BLZZT!


THEN...
BLAM!

THE GREAT VIBRANIUM MOUND IS *SHAKEN* BY TREMORS -- AND *CRACKS* UNDER MOUNTING STRESS...
WOOOOMM

MOMENTS LATER, THE FURY *SUBSIDES* -- AND ONLY FADING ECHOES REMAIN AS THE LAST VESTIGE OF A CATASTROPHE THAT WILL *NEVER* HAPPEN...


DON'T RELAX—!
THERE IS A *NEW* SUPER-VILLAIN ON THE WAY!!
COMING NEXT:
KOBER THE CRUEL
HIS POWERS WILL ASTOUND YOU!!

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BLACK PANTHER™
SINISTER ARE THE SERVANTS OF--
KIBER the CRUEL!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

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HE LOOKS LIKE A SUPER-VILLAIN··· HE BEHAVES LIKE A SUPER-VILLAIN··· BUT WHEN THIS INCIDENT IN T'CHALLA'S LIFE IS OVER, YOU'LL RUN FOR THE HILLS WHEN YOU FINALLY GRASP THE TRUE IDENTITY OF--
KIBER THE CRUEL
IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN··· I'M BACK IN THIS STRANGE, SILENT PLACE··· SEARCHING··· SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE WHO IS IN GREAT DANGER!
BUT WHO CAN IT BE? WHY MUST I RELIVE THIS NIGHT-MARISH EXPERIENCE?!

C965

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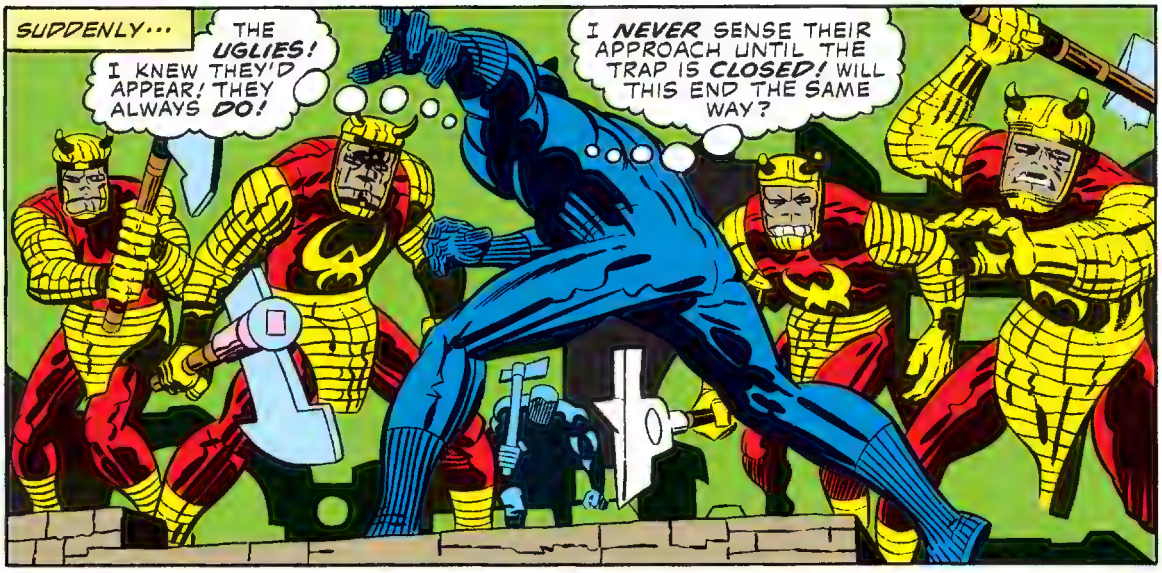
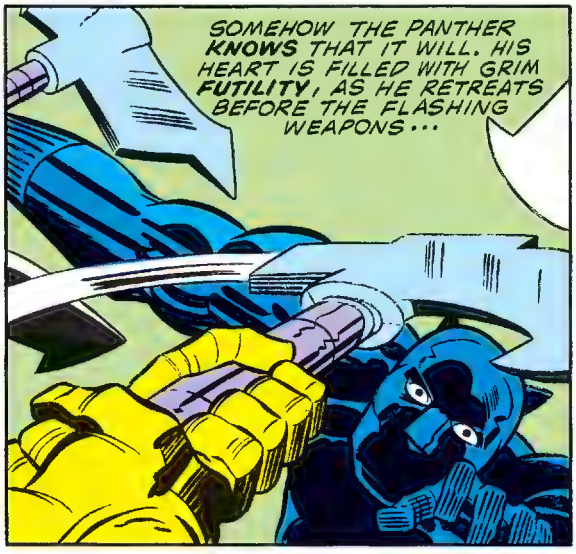
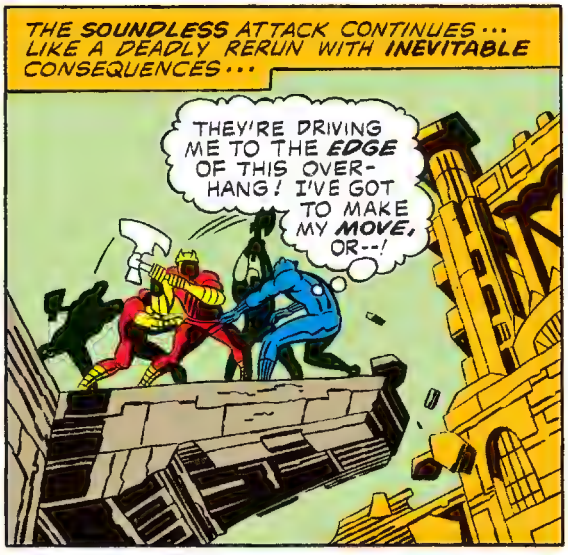
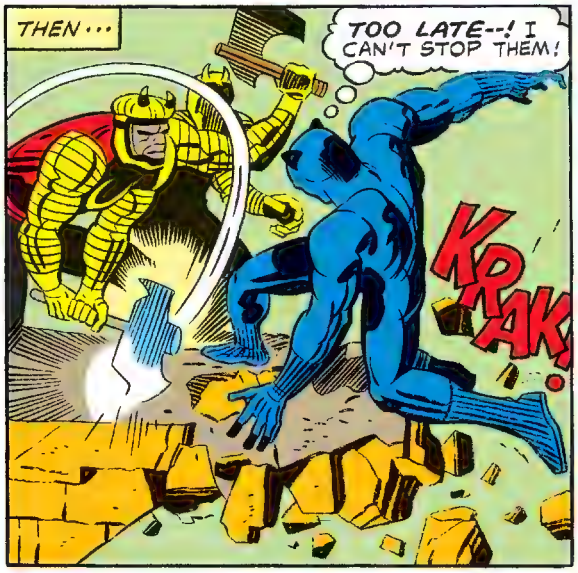
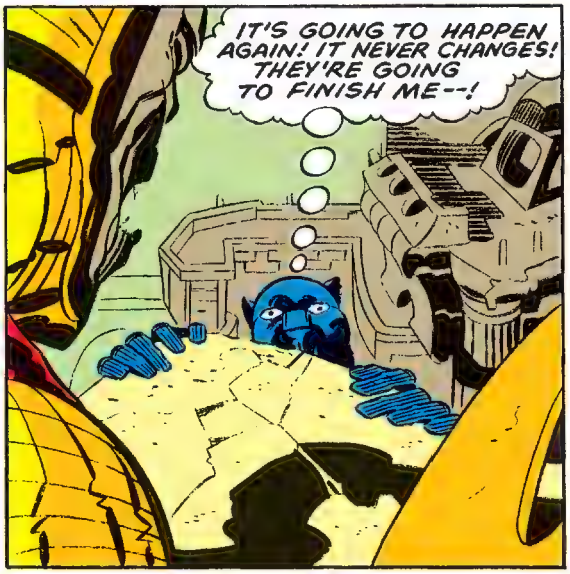
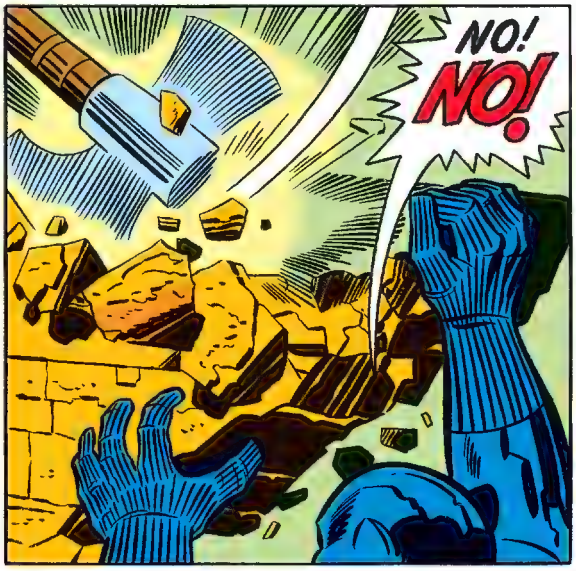

SUDDENLY···
THE UGLIES! I KNEW THEY'D APPEAR! THEY ALWAYS DO!
I NEVER SENSE THEIR APPROACH UNTIL THE TRAP IS CLOSED! WILL THIS END THE SAME WAY?


SOMEHOW THE PANTHER KNOWS THAT IT WILL. HIS HEART IS FILLED WITH GRIM FUTILITY, AS HE RETREATS BEFORE THE FLASHING WEAPONS···


THE SOUNDLESS ATTACK CONTINUES··· LIKE A DEADLY RERUN WITH INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES···
THEY'RE DRIVING ME TO THE EDGE OF THIS OVER-HANG! I'VE GOT TO MAKE MY MOVE, OR--!

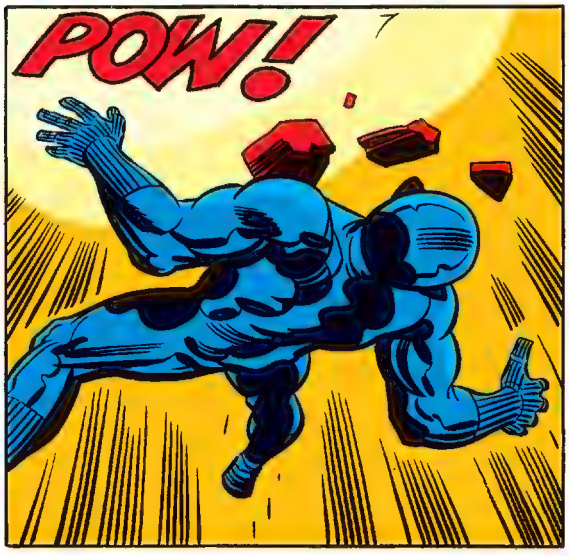

THEN···
TOO LATE--! I CAN'T STOP THEM!
KRAK!


IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN AGAIN! IT NEVER CHANGES! THEY'RE GOING TO FINISH ME--!

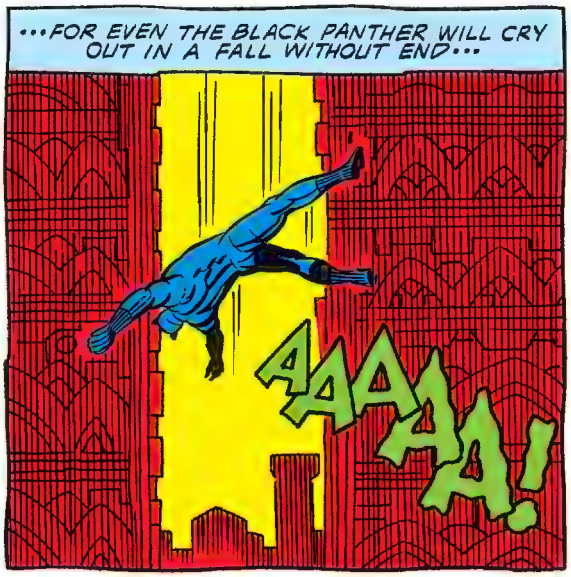

NO!
NO!

THE DREADED MOMENT ARRIVES. IT IS TO BE SHORT AND FINAL...

I WON'T DIE AT YOUR HAND, DO YOU HEAR?!

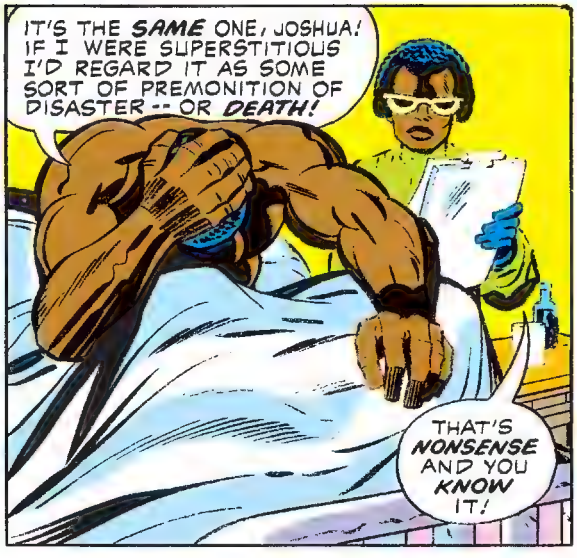

POW!

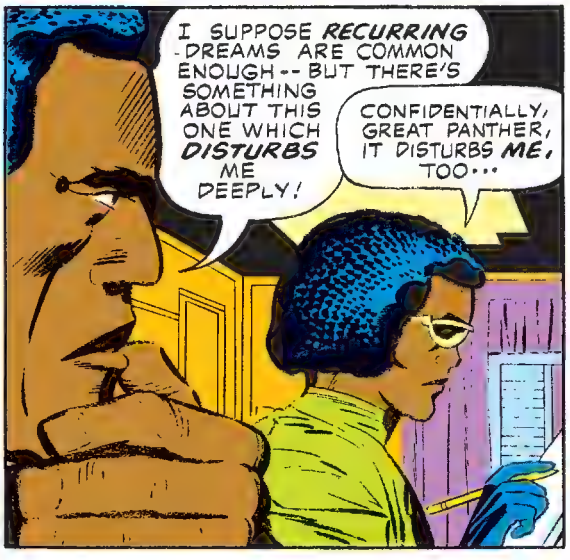
TERROR TAKES OVER AS THE PLUNGE BEGINS...

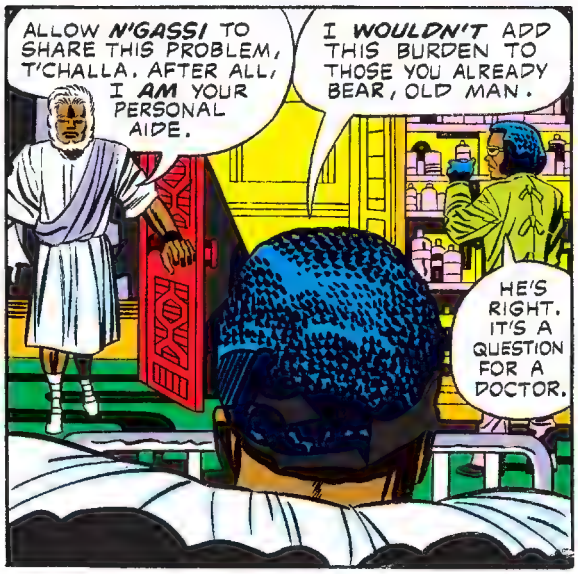

...FOR EVEN THE BLACK PANTHER WILL CRY OUT IN A FALL WITHOUT END...
AAAAAA!

AAAAAAA!
T'CHALLA! T'CHALLA! WAKE UP!!

PRAISE THE SACRED CULT! IT'S YOU, JOSHUA ITOBO!
JUST RELAX, T'CHALLA!
YOU'VE MERELY HAD ANOTHER NIGHT-MARE!


IT'S THE SAME ONE, JOSHUA! IF I WERE SUPERSTITIOUS I'D REGARD IT AS SOME SORT OF PREMONITION OF DISASTER -- OR DEATH!
THAT'S NONSENSE AND YOU KNOW IT!

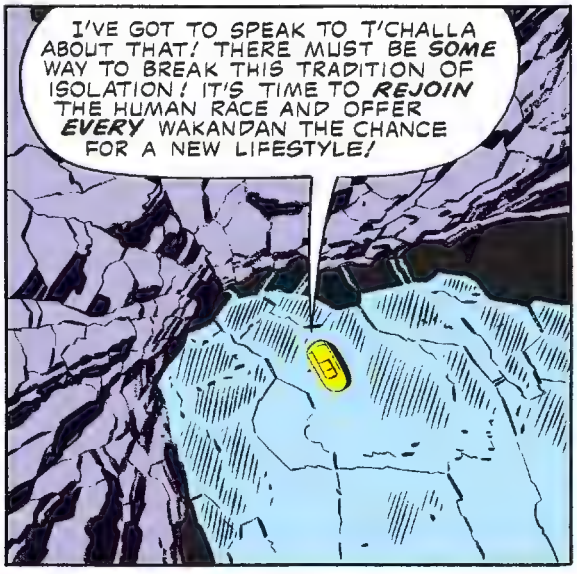

I SUPPOSE RECURRING DREAMS ARE COMMON ENOUGH -- BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS ONE WHICH DISTURBS ME DEEPLY!
CONFIDENTIALLY, GREAT PANTHER, IT DISTURBS ME, TOO...

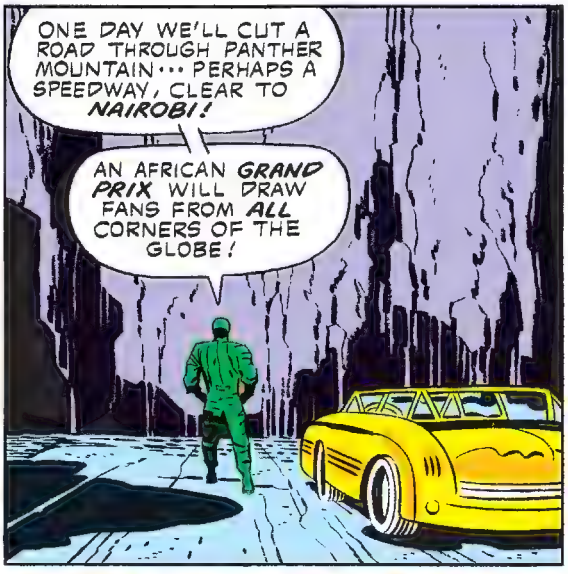

ALLOW N'GASSI TO SHARE THIS PROBLEM, T'CHALLA. AFTER ALL, I AM YOUR PERSONAL AIDE.
I WOULDN'T ADD THIS BURDEN TO THOSE YOU ALREADY BEAR, OLD MAN.
HE'S RIGHT. IT'S A QUESTION FOR A DOCTOR.

IF YOU BROUGHT THOSE OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FOR MY SIGNATURE, PLEASE PUT THEM ON THE TABLE.
IT'S BEEN THAT BAD, EH? I WAS HOPING YOUR RECOVERY WOULD BE A PERIOD OF HEALING AND REST.
I'LL GET TO THEM SHORTLY.

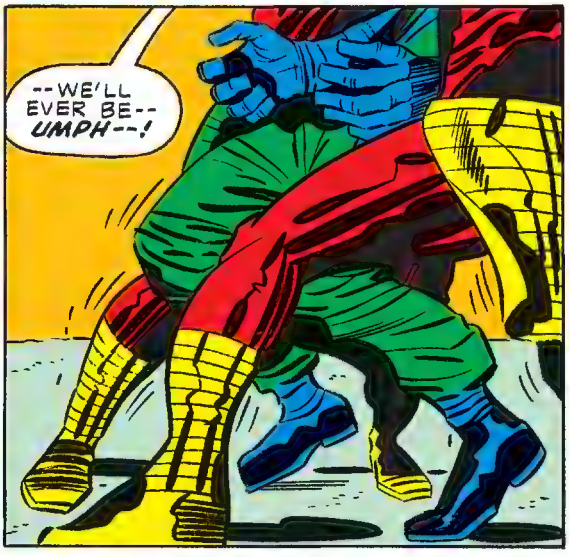
I'VE HAD NO REST AT ALL! MY BODY IS HEALING -- BUT MY BRAIN HAS BECOME A VIOLENT MADHOUSE!
BACK TO BED, T'CHALLA! YOU'RE STILL NOT READY FOR THIS!
LET HIM STAND, N'GASSI! IT WILL DO HIM NO HARM!
IF THE INCIDENT IN THE GREAT VIBRANIUM MOUND IS THE SOURCE OF YOUR TROUBLE, THEN CLOSE YOUR MIND TO IT! SHUT IT OUT!
I CAN'T DO IT! DON'T YOU SEE? I CAN'T SHUT ANYTHING OUT!
GO ON.
WHEN THEY DUG ME FROM THE BOWELS OF THAT COLLAPSED RUIN, I WAS SUFFERING FROM MORE THAN BODILY INJURY!
I'D ALSO BEEN EXPOSED TO THE EFFECTS OF THAT DEVILISH METAL!
THAT'S TRUE, BUT--!
SILENCE!
OPEN EACH EYE WHEN I ASK IT.
EXAMINE ME TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT, JOSHUA!
BUT I FEAR THAT YOUR INSTRUMENTS CAN'T COPE WITH WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME!
IF THERE ARE TESTS FOR PSYCHIC ABILITIES, THEN I SUGGEST YOU TAKE THAT DIRECTION! MY VISIONS ARE FRIGHTENINGLY REAL!
AT THAT MOMENT...
KHANATA OF THE RULING FAMILY HAS TAKEN TO THE ROAD ONCE MORE.
HE SHOULD BE CAUTIONED AGAINST EXCESSIVE SPEEDS UNTIL THEY'VE BEEN DECLARED SAFE FOR TRAVEL!

SORRY TO DETAIN YOU, BRAVE KHANATA, BUT ALL OF OUR ROADS ARE--!
THE VIBRANIUM CRISIS IS OVER, IS IT NOT?
WELL, IN SOME WAYS IT IS STILL IN EFFECT!
I SEE. YOU THINK THE ROADS MAY HAVE SUSTAINED SHOCK DAMAGE DURING THE MOUND'S COLLAPSE.
IT'S POSSIBLE, SIRE. I'D ADVISE AGAINST DRIVING AT MAXIMUM SPEED. IT COULD BE DANGEROUS!
ONE MIGHT AS WELL WARN THE WIND AGAINST BLOWING!
HE'S A BORN RACER!
ZZZOOM!
BLESS THE MILITIA. IT'S FAITHFUL TO A FAULT! BUT I'VE FELT LIKE A CAGED LEOPARD SINCE THE EMERGENCY ENDED!
WHILE T'CHALLA HEALS AND THE FAMILY RELAXES, I'LL TAKE TO THE WHEEL AND TEST THESE ROADS MYSELF!
THEY'RE REALLY NOT BAD!
BUT THEY END TOO SOON! THE MOUNTAIN WALLS CLOSE IN AND CUT THE WAKANDAS OFF FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD!
THE VIBRANIUM TABOO HAS MADE THIS LAND A PRISON FOR CENTURIES!


I'VE GOT TO SPEAK TO T'CHALLA ABOUT THAT! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO BREAK THIS TRADITION OF ISOLATION! IT'S TIME TO REJOIN THE HUMAN RACE AND OFFER EVERY WAKANDAN THE CHANCE FOR A NEW LIFESTYLE!

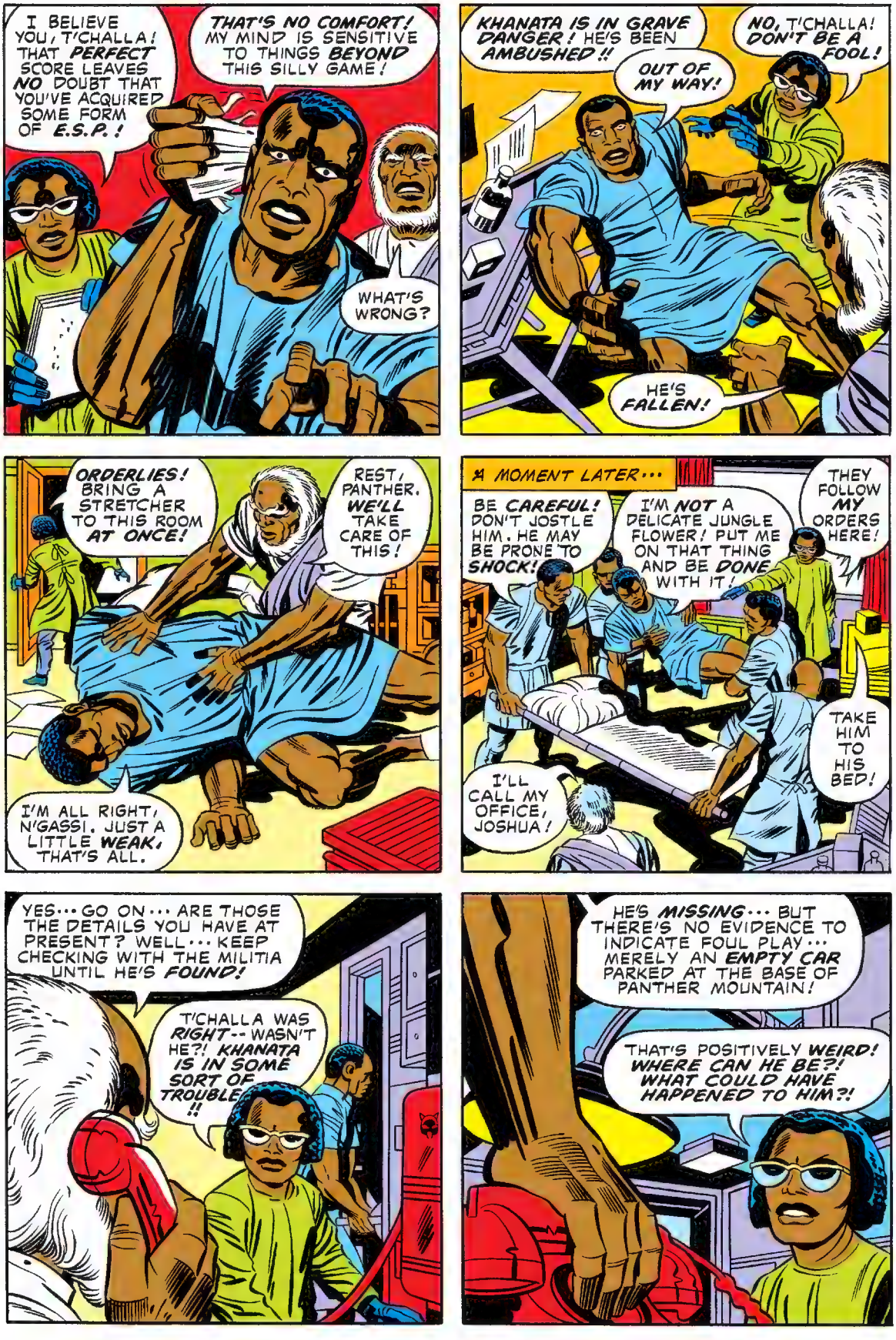

ONE DAY WE'LL CUT A ROAD THROUGH PANTHER MOUNTAIN··· PERHAPS A SPEEDWAY, CLEAR TO NAIROBI!
AN AFRICAN GRAND PRIX WILL DRAW FANS FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE GLOBE!

UNTIL THAT DAY COMES, THE MOUNTAIN WILL KEEP US COZY AND VISITOR-PROOF! A LEGION OF MILITANT MOLES COULDN'T MAKE A DENT IN THAT MASS OF ROCK!
WE'RE AS SAFE FROM INTRUSION AS--


--WE'LL EVER BE-- UMPH--!

MEANWHILE···
CAN YOU READ THIS NEXT CARD?
SPEAK, T'CHALLA, SPEAK!
THREE NUMBERS: TWO, ONE, AND FOUR!
2 1 4

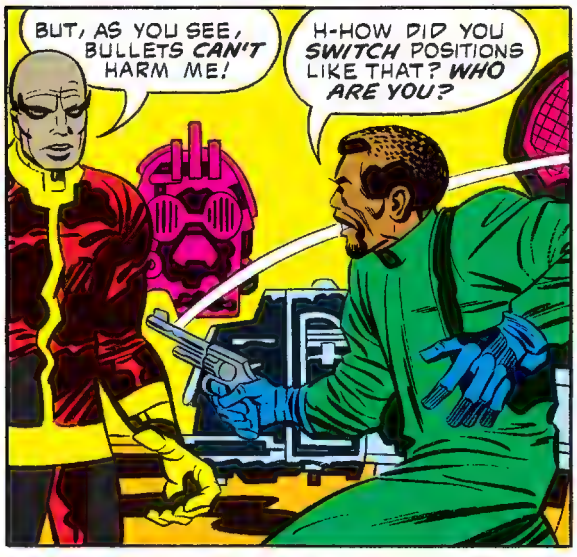
INCREDIBLE!
ONCE AGAIN, PANTHER-- THIS LAST CARD--!
IT'S AN ILLUSTRATION OF A MISSILE! I KNOW I'M CORRECT-- DESPITE THIS BLINDFOLD, I CAN SEE IT!

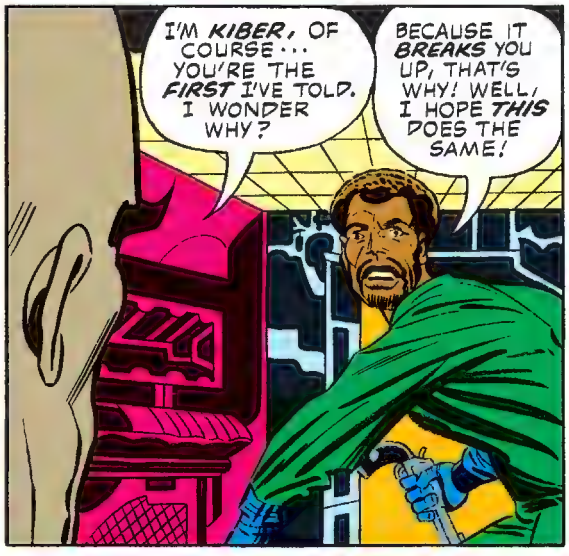

I BELIEVE YOU, T'CHALLA! THAT PERFECT SCORE LEAVES NO DOUBT THAT YOU'VE ACQUIRED SOME FORM OF E.S.P.!
THAT'S NO COMFORT! MY MIND IS SENSITIVE TO THINGS BEYOND THIS SILLY GAME!
WHAT'S WRONG?
KHANATA IS IN GRAVE DANGER! HE'S BEEN AMBUSHED!!
OUT OF MY WAY!
NO, T'CHALLA! DON'T BE A FOOL!
HE'S FALLEN!
ORDERLIES! BRING A STRETCHER TO THIS ROOM AT ONCE!
REST, PANTHER. WE'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS!
I'M ALL RIGHT, N'GASSI. JUST A LITTLE WEAK, THAT'S ALL.
A MOMENT LATER...
BE CAREFUL! DON'T JOSTLE HIM. HE MAY BE PRONE TO SHOCK!
I'M NOT A DELICATE JUNGLE FLOWER! PUT ME ON THAT THING AND BE DONE WITH IT!
THEY FOLLOW MY ORDERS HERE!
TAKE HIM TO HIS BED!
I'LL CALL MY OFFICE, JOSHUA!
YES... GO ON... ARE THOSE THE DETAILS YOU HAVE AT PRESENT? WELL... KEEP CHECKING WITH THE MILITIA UNTIL HE'S FOUND!
T'CHALLA WAS RIGHT -- WASN'T HE?! KHANATA IS IN SOME SORT OF TROUBLE!!
HE'S MISSING... BUT THERE'S NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE FOUL PLAY... MERELY AN EMPTY CAR PARKED AT THE BASE OF PANTHER MOUNTAIN!
THAT'S POSITIVELY WEIRD! WHERE CAN HE BE?! WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM?!

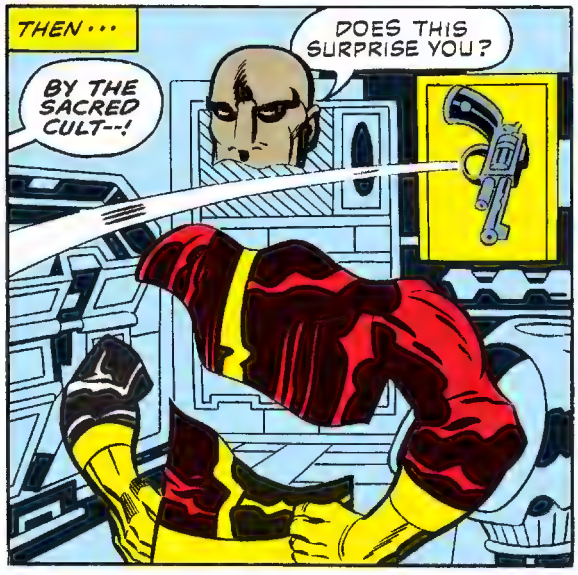
IT IS A QUESTION WHICH NOT EVEN KHANATA CAN ANSWER. INSTEAD, IT EARNS HIM BRUTAL TREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF HIS CAPTORS...
KRAK!
SPEAK ONLY WHEN I ADDRESS YOU!
IT'LL TAKE A LOT MORE THAN THAT INTIMIDATE ME! I'M A WAKANDAN! AND WE HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF GIVING AS GOOD AS WE GET!
THREATS ARE FUTILE HERE! THESE WEAPONS DID LITTLE TO PROTECT THEIR OWNERS!
YOU SHALL JOIN THEM SOON!
I SEE... WELL, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND HOW A MAN FEELS WHEN HE'S MINDING HIS OWN BUSINESS IN ONE PLACE -- AND SUDDENLY FINDS HIMSELF ABDUCTED TO ANOTHER!
EXPLANATIONS WILL CHANGE NOTHING!
YOU WERE TAKEN FOR A PURPOSE!
THAT PURPOSE ALONE IS OF IMPORTANCE!

NOT TO ME, MAN! I DON'T KNOW HOW I GOT HERE! IT HAPPENED TOO FAST! BUT YOU'RE GOING TO GET ME BACK--OR DIE!
SHOOT THEN! GO AHEAD!

POW! POW! POW!
WAKANDANS DON'T BLUFF!!
THAT'S EVIDENTLY TRUE!

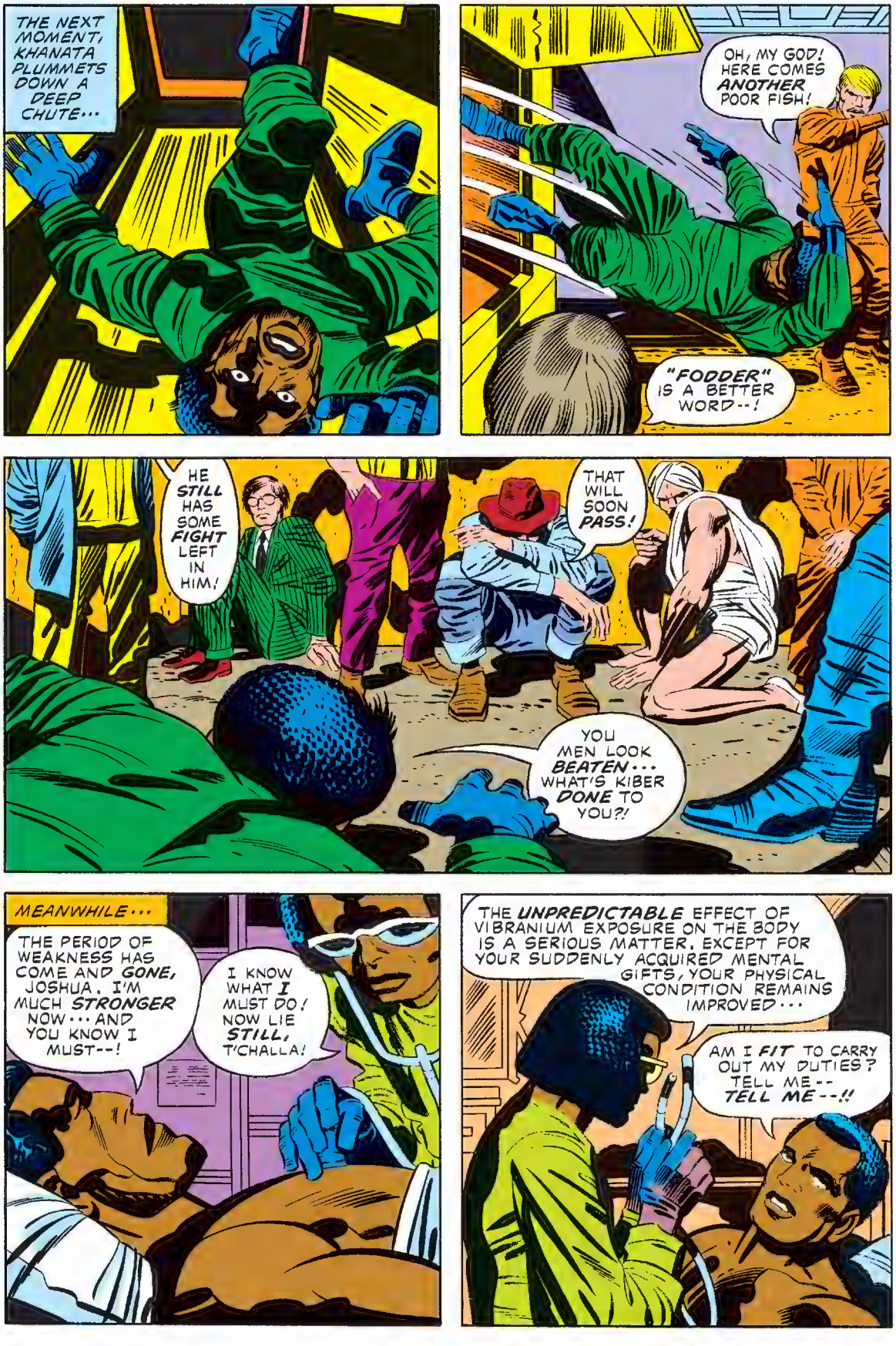

BUT, AS YOU SEE, BULLETS CAN'T HARM ME!
H-HOW DID YOU SWITCH POSITIONS LIKE THAT? WHO ARE YOU?

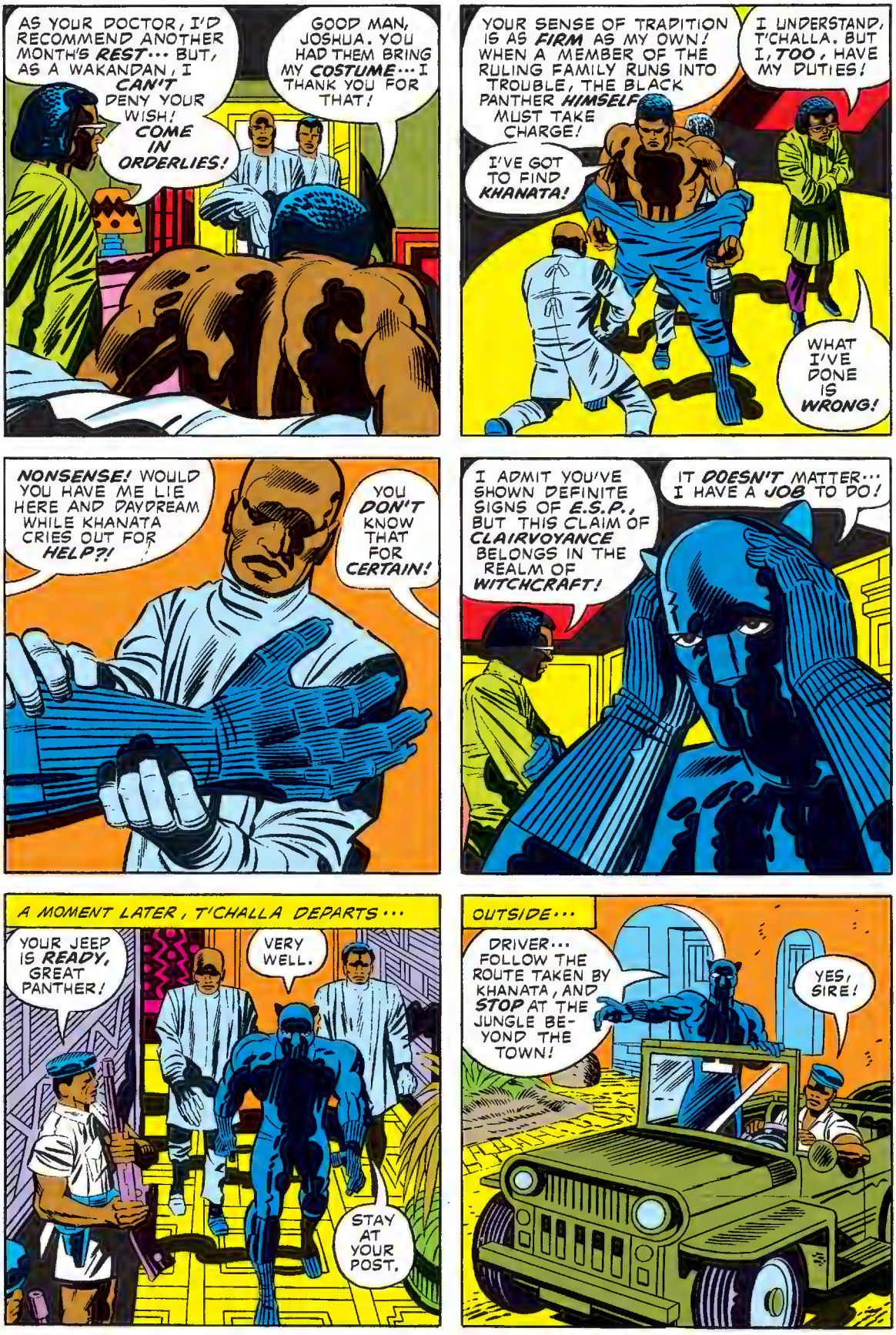

I'M KIBER, OF COURSE... YOU'RE THE FIRST I'VE TOLD. I WONDER WHY?
BECAUSE IT BREAKS YOU UP, THAT'S WHY! WELL, I HOPE THIS DOES THE SAME!

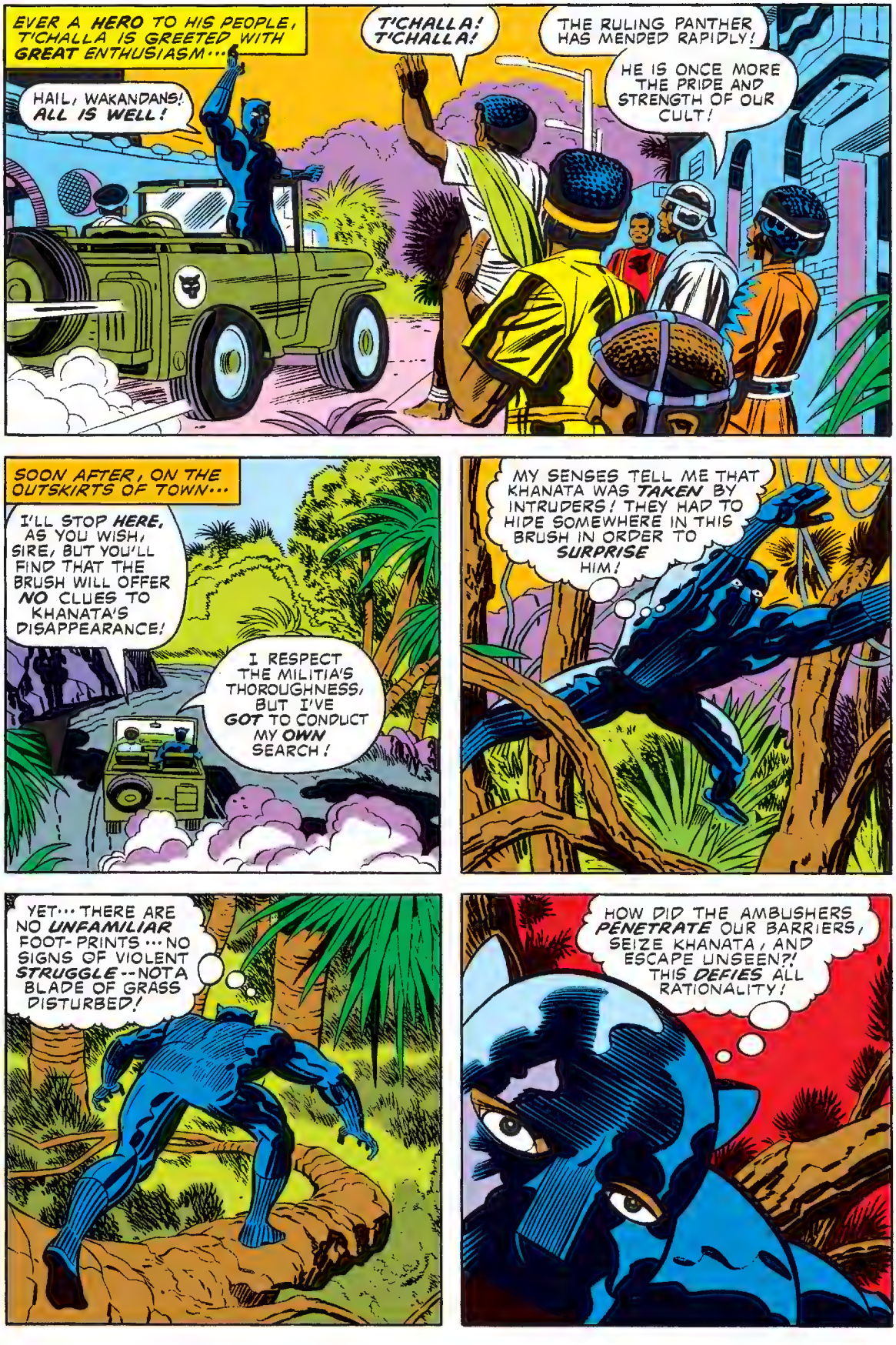

THEN...
BY THE SACRED CULT--!
DOES THIS SURPRISE YOU?

I CAN SHOW YOU MORE OF MY TALENTS! YOU SEEM TO FIND ME AMUSING!
GET BACK! DON'T TOUCH ME!

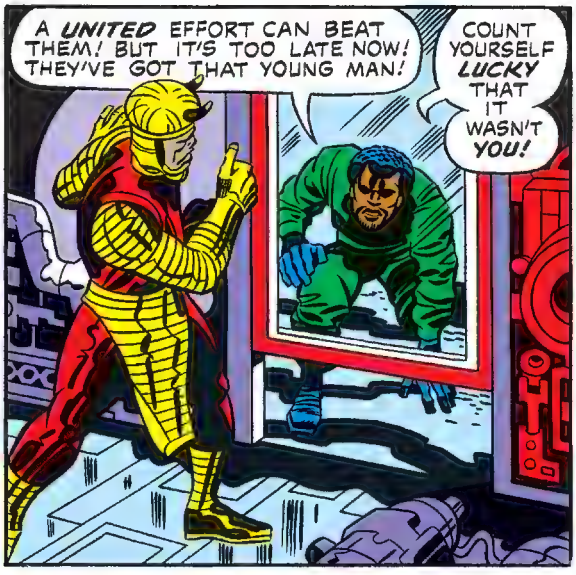
AS KIBER'S HANDS MAKE CONTACT WITH KHANATA...
SSKTCH!
IT WOULD DEFEAT MY PURPOSE TO DESTROY YOU! BUT, YOU MUST BE AWARE THAT I CAN!
WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?
WHY WAS I BROUGHT HERE?!
BECAUSE I NEED YOU! I NEED MANY MORE LIKE YOU TO SUSTAIN MY POWER!
BUT YOUR NUMBER WILL GROW IN TIME--AND SO WILL THE STRENGTH OF KIBER!
THINK HOW STRONG I SHALL BE WHEN I CAN GATHER YOU UP IN DROVES AND BRING YOU HERE!
YOU SEE, POWER IS LIFE ITSELF TO ME! MY VERY REASON FOR BEING DEPENDS ON IT!
IT'S AN OLD STORY! YOU NEED AN ARMY OF SLAVES TO HELP YOUR FATTEN YOUR EGO!
YOU'LL LEARN MORE WHEN YOU JOIN THE OTHERS!
I'LL NEVER CRACK, KIBER! NEVER!


THE NEXT MOMENT, KHANATA PLUMMETS DOWN A DEEP CHUTE...
OH, MY GOD! HERE COMES ANOTHER POOR FISH!
"FODDER" IS A BETTER WORD--!
HE STILL HAS SOME FIGHT LEFT IN HIM!
THAT WILL SOON PASS!
YOU MEN LOOK BEATEN... WHAT'S KIBER DONE TO YOU?!
MEANWHILE...
THE PERIOD OF WEAKNESS HAS COME AND GONE, JOSHUA. I'M MUCH STRONGER NOW... AND YOU KNOW I MUST--!
I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO! NOW LIE STILL, T'CHALLA!
THE UNPREDICTABLE EFFECT OF VIBRANIUM EXPOSURE ON THE BODY IS A SERIOUS MATTER. EXCEPT FOR YOUR SUDDENLY ACQUIRED MENTAL GIFTS, YOUR PHYSICAL CONDITION REMAINS IMPROVED...
AM I FIT TO CARRY OUT MY DUTIES? TELL ME-- TELL ME--!!

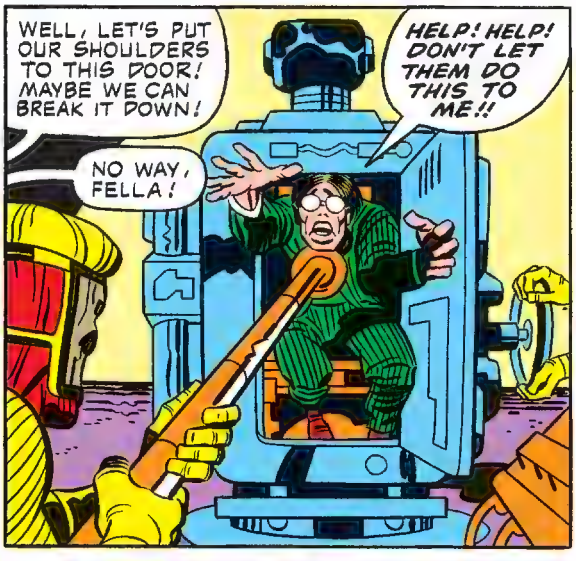

AS YOUR DOCTOR, I'D RECOMMEND ANOTHER MONTH'S REST··· BUT, AS A WAKANDAN, I CAN'T DENY YOUR WISH! COME IN ORDERLIES!
GOOD MAN, JOSHUA. YOU HAD THEM BRING MY COSTUME··· I THANK YOU FOR THAT!
YOUR SENSE OF TRADITION IS AS FIRM AS MY OWN! WHEN A MEMBER OF THE RULING FAMILY RUNS INTO TROUBLE, THE BLACK PANTHER HIMSELF MUST TAKE CHARGE!
I'VE GOT TO FIND KHANATA!
I UNDERSTAND, T'CHALLA. BUT I, TOO, HAVE MY DUTIES!
WHAT I'VE DONE IS WRONG!
NONSENSE! WOULD YOU HAVE ME LIE HERE AND DAYDREAM WHILE KHANATA CRIES OUT FOR HELP?!
YOU DON'T KNOW THAT FOR CERTAIN!
I ADMIT YOU'VE SHOWN DEFINITE SIGNS OF E.S.P., BUT THIS CLAIM OF CLAIRVOYANCE BELONGS IN THE REALM OF WITCHCRAFT!
IT DOESN'T MATTER··· I HAVE A JOB TO DO!
A MOMENT LATER, T'CHALLA DEPARTS···
YOUR JEEP IS READY, GREAT PANTHER!
VERY WELL.
STAY AT YOUR POST.
OUTSIDE···
DRIVER··· FOLLOW THE ROUTE TAKEN BY KHANATA, AND STOP AT THE JUNGLE BEYOND THE TOWN!
YES, SIRE!


EVER A HERO TO HIS PEOPLE, T'CHALLA IS GREETED WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM...
HAIL, WAKANDANS! ALL IS WELL!
T'CHALLA! T'CHALLA!
THE RULING PANTHER HAS MENDED RAPIDLY!
HE IS ONCE MORE THE PRIDE AND STRENGTH OF OUR CULT!
SOON AFTER, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN...
I'LL STOP HERE, AS YOU WISH, SIRE, BUT YOU'LL FIND THAT THE BRUSH WILL OFFER NO CLUES TO KHANATA'S DISAPPEARANCE!
I RESPECT THE MILITIA'S THOROUGHNESS, BUT I'VE GOT TO CONDUCT MY OWN SEARCH!
MY SENSES TELL ME THAT KHANATA WAS TAKEN BY INTRUDERS! THEY HAD TO HIDE SOMEWHERE IN THIS BRUSH IN ORDER TO SURPRISE HIM!
YET... THERE ARE NO UNFAMILIAR FOOT-PRINTS ... NO SIGNS OF VIOLENT STRUGGLE -- NOT A BLADE OF GRASS DISTURBED!
HOW DID THE AMBUSHERS PENETRATE OUR BARRIERS, SEIZE KHANATA, AND ESCAPE UNSEEN?! THIS DEFIES ALL RATIONALITY!

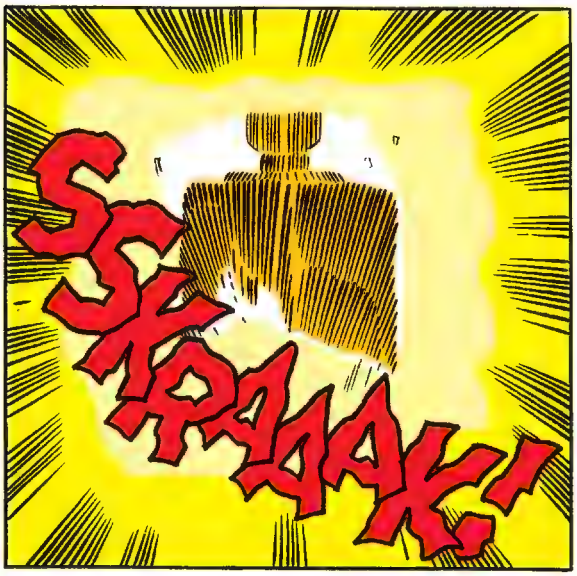
MEANWHILE, AT AN UNKNOWN LOCATION···
KIBER'S HUNTING DOGS-- THEY'RE AFTER ONE OF US!
WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO?
NOT ME! DON'T TAKE ME!
SUDDENLY···
LET HIM GO, YOU DEVILS!
THEY'VE CHOSEN THE KID!
NO! NO!!
PLEASE! PLEASE! I DON'T WANT TO GO OUT THERE!
YOU CAN'T DRAG HIM OFF AGAINST HIS WILL!
IT'S USELESS TO FIGHT THEM!
I-I CAN'T HANDLE HIM ALONE! GIVE ME A HAND, YOU MEN! WE CAN TAKE HIM TOGETHER!
WHAK!
DON'T RESIST! WE TRIED IT AND FAILED!

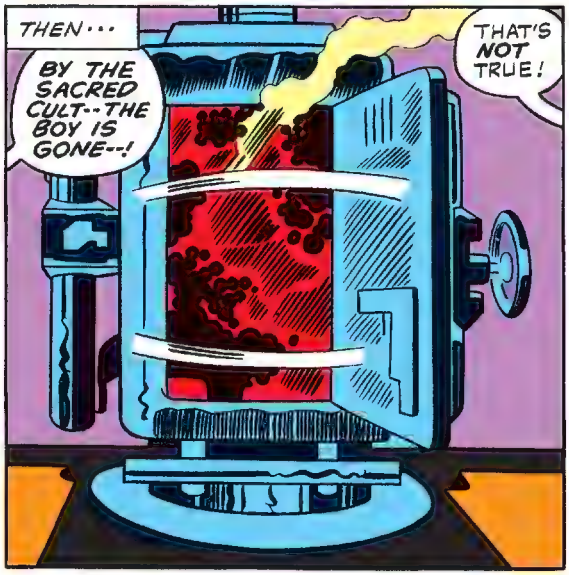

A UNITED EFFORT CAN BEAT THEM! BUT IT'S TOO LATE NOW! THEY'VE GOT THAT YOUNG MAN!
COUNT YOURSELF LUCKY THAT IT WASN'T YOU!

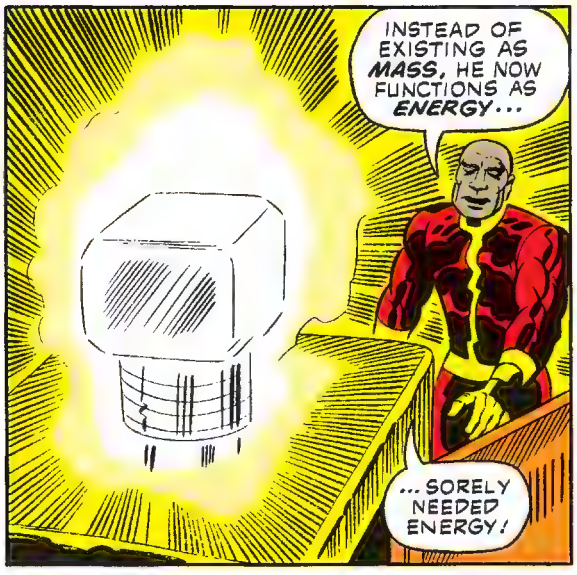
THEY'RE FORCING HIM INTO SOME SORT OF STEEL CABINET! WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO HIM?
DON'T LOOK! IT ISN'T PRETTY!

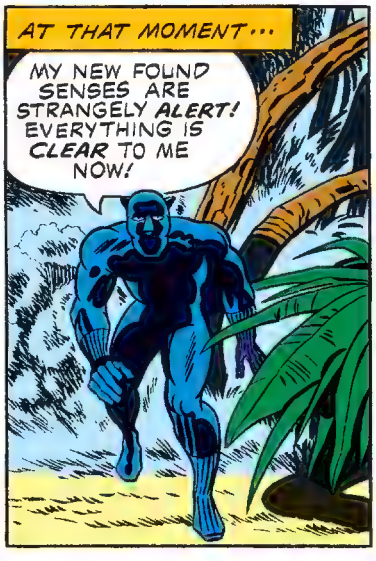

WELL, LET'S PUT OUR SHOULDERS TO THIS DOOR! MAYBE WE CAN BREAK IT DOWN!
HELP! HELP! DON'T LET THEM DO THIS TO ME!!
NO WAY, FELLA!

KLANNG
STAND CLEAR!
THE CHAMBER IS SEALED!

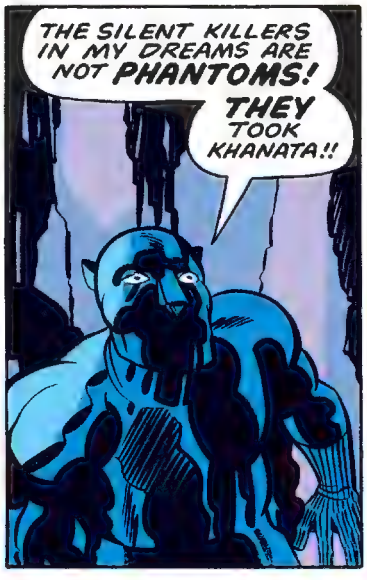

SSKRRAAK!


THEN···
BY THE SACRED CULT--THE BOY IS GONE--!
THAT'S NOT TRUE!





THIS IS WHERE IT HAPPENED --AT THE BASE OF PANTHER MOUNTAIN--!
THE INTRUDERS CAME THROUGH THIS MASS OF ROCK--AND LEFT THE SAME WAY!!



FANTASTIC, YOU SAY!? WELL, YOU'VE STILL GOT TO READ--

THE KIBER CLUE

COMING IN OUR NEXT ISSUE, ON SALE AUG. 15!

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BLACK PANTHER
TM
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THROUGH WALLS OF STONE THEY STALK!
BEWARE... THE AGENTS OF KIBER!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY **JACK KIRBY** • EMBELLISHED BY **MIKE ROYER** • COLORED BY **PETRA GOLDBERG** • **JIM SHOOTER** CONSULTING EDITOR

HIS MENTAL AWARENESS HEIGHTENED BY VIBRANIUM EXPOSURE, T'CHALLA MUST REACH INTO LIMBO ITSELF TO TRACK DOWN THE ABDUCTORS OF ONE OF HIS KIN. IT IS A TIME TO CHALLENGE THE UNKNOWN-- TO DARE THE IMPOSSIBLE-- AND FIND THE ANSWER TO--
THE KIBER CLUE
WE'VE MADE MENTAL CONTACT, KHANATA! YOU MUST FORGET YOUR FEAR AND THINK CLEARLY!
DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE?
THERE'S NO WAY TO TELL!
HELP ME, T'CHALLA! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE HERE!

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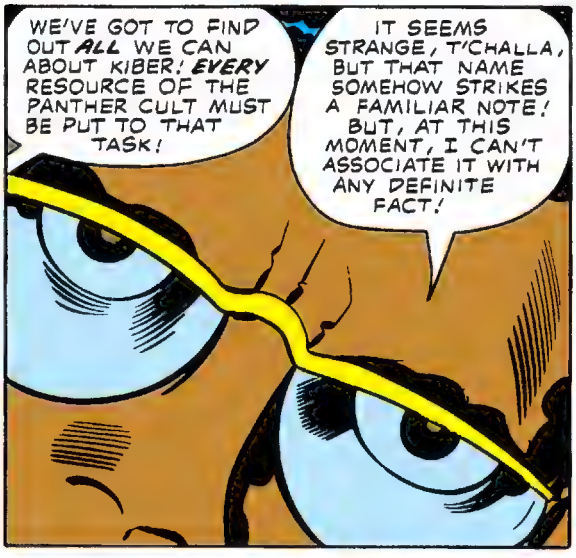
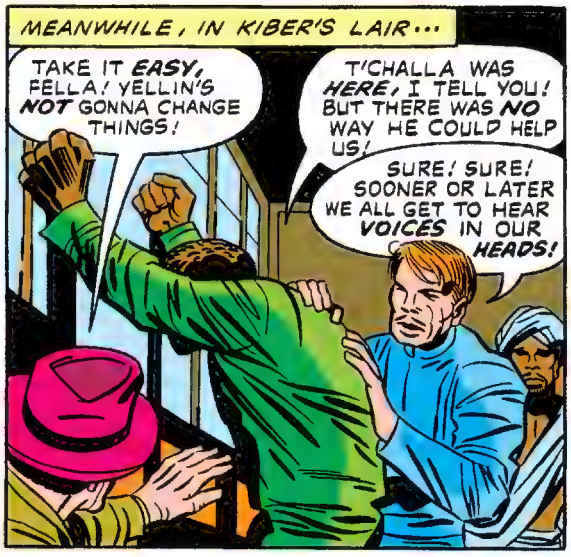
BE CALM··· LET ME ABSORB THE FEW FACTS YOU'VE GIVEN ME.
YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
I'LL TRY, KHANATA! SOMEHOW I'LL PUT THIS PUZZLE TOGETHER AND COME FOR YOU! KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP!
BE QUICK, GREAT PANTHER! IT MAY SOON BE MY TURN TO DIE!
AT THAT MOMENT···
COME IN, JOSHUA ITOBA. YOU NEEDN'T ANNOUNCE YOURSELF··· I SENSED YOUR APPROACH!
I'VE BEEN LETTING MY THOUGHTS RUN FREE IN THE DARKNESS···
YOU MUST LIMIT THESE EXERCISES. IT'S TIME TO REST.
LISTEN TO ME, JOSHUA··· I'VE BEEN IN COMMUNICATION WITH KHANATA! HE'S BEING HELD WITH OTHERS IN SOME NAMELESS PLACE HE CAN'T DESCRIBE!
BUT, FOR WHAT PURPOSE? WHO'S AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS?!
I CAUGHT THE NAME KIBER! IT ROSE UP IN KHANATA'S MIND ON A WAVE OF FEAR!
IT'S NOT LIKE KHANATA TO BE AFRAID···

IF THIS KIBER CAN MAKE BRAVE MEN TREMBLE, HE'S SOMEONE TO BE RECKONED WITH!
POOR KHANATA! I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY KIBER CHOSE HIM FOR ABDUCTION!

HE'S A LIKEABLE, FOOTLOOSE, FAST-CAR ENTHUSIAST! I DIDN'T THINK HE HAD AN ENEMY IN THE WORLD!
HE HAS NOW··· AND FROM WHAT I SENSED, HE'S FACING SOME SORT OF DANGER TOO HORRIBLE TO TALK ABOUT!

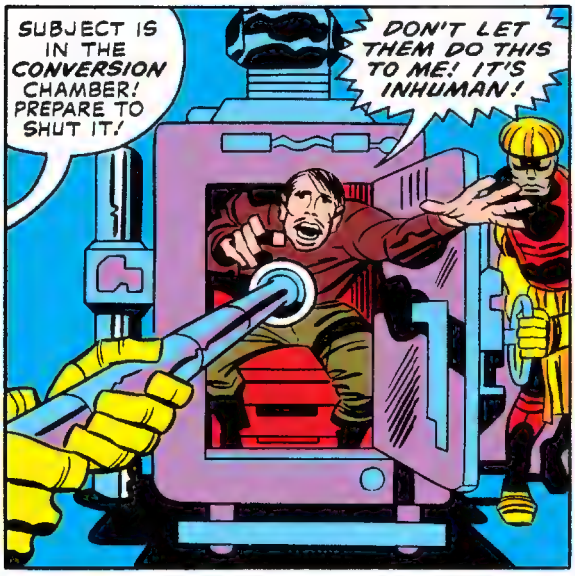

WE'VE GOT TO FIND OUT ALL WE CAN ABOUT KIBER! EVERY RESOURCE OF THE PANTHER CULT MUST BE PUT TO THAT TASK!
IT SEEMS STRANGE, T'CHALLA, BUT THAT NAME SOMEHOW STRIKES A FAMILIAR NOTE! BUT, AT THIS MOMENT, I CAN'T ASSOCIATE IT WITH ANY DEFINITE FACT!

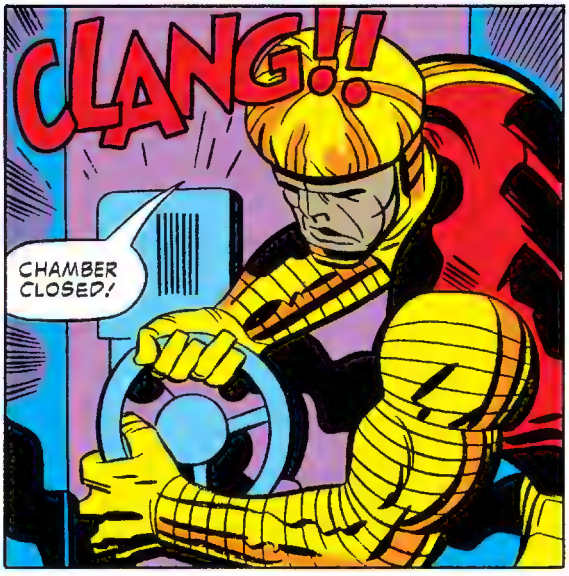

MEANWHILE, IN KIBER'S LAIR···
TAKE IT EASY, FELLA! YELLIN'S NOT GONNA CHANGE THINGS!
T'CHALLA WAS HERE, I TELL YOU! BUT THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD HELP US!
SURE! SURE! SOONER OR LATER WE ALL GET TO HEAR VOICES IN OUR HEADS!

BUT, YOU'VE GOT TO GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF! WE'RE IN A BAD FIX!
HE'LL FIND US! HE'LL GET US OUT OF THIS PLACE! WE'VE GOT A CHANCE NOW!
QUIET! THOSE CRUMMY GUARDS WILL HEAR YOU!

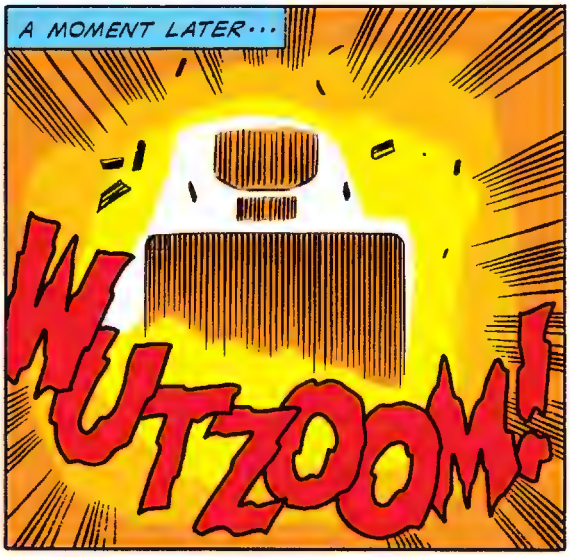
TOO LATE! HERE THEY COME!
THEY'RE GOING TO GRAB ONE OF US-- LIKE A STEER FOR THE SLAUGHTER!

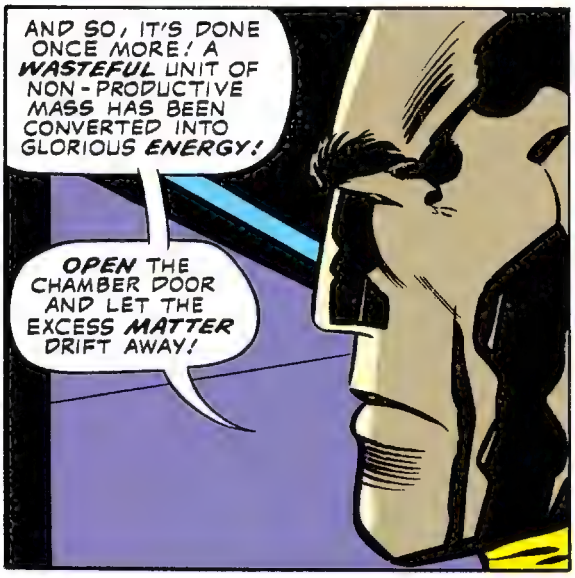
THERE IS PANIC AMONG THE CAPTIVES AS KIBER'S GUARDS CLOSE IN···
NO! NO! NOT ME!
GO AHEAD, YOU MUSCLE-BOUND WEIRDOS! A RULING PANTHER WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO DIE!!
THEY'RE GONNA MAKE THEIR MOVE! I CAN TELL!
SUDDENLY···
LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
HELP ME!
TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HIM!
KRAK!
FOOL! YOU KNOW IT'S USELESS TO TRY TO STOP THEM! THEY'RE TOO STRONG!
GIVE THANKS THAT THEY DIDN'T TAKE YOU!
BUT WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO STOP IT!

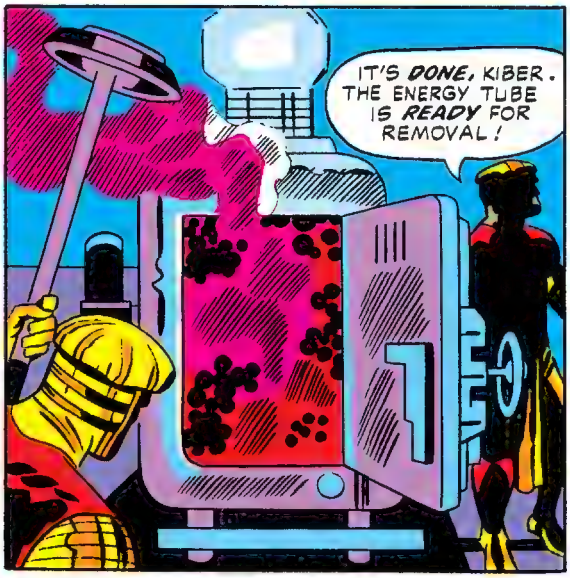

SUBJECT IS IN THE CONVERSION CHAMBER! PREPARE TO SHUT IT!
DON'T LET THEM DO THIS TO ME! IT'S INHUMAN!


CLANG!!
CHAMBER CLOSED!

STAND CLEAR! THOSE WHO ARE TOO SLOW TO AVOID THE POWER BACKLASH WILL SHATTER LIKE EGGS!

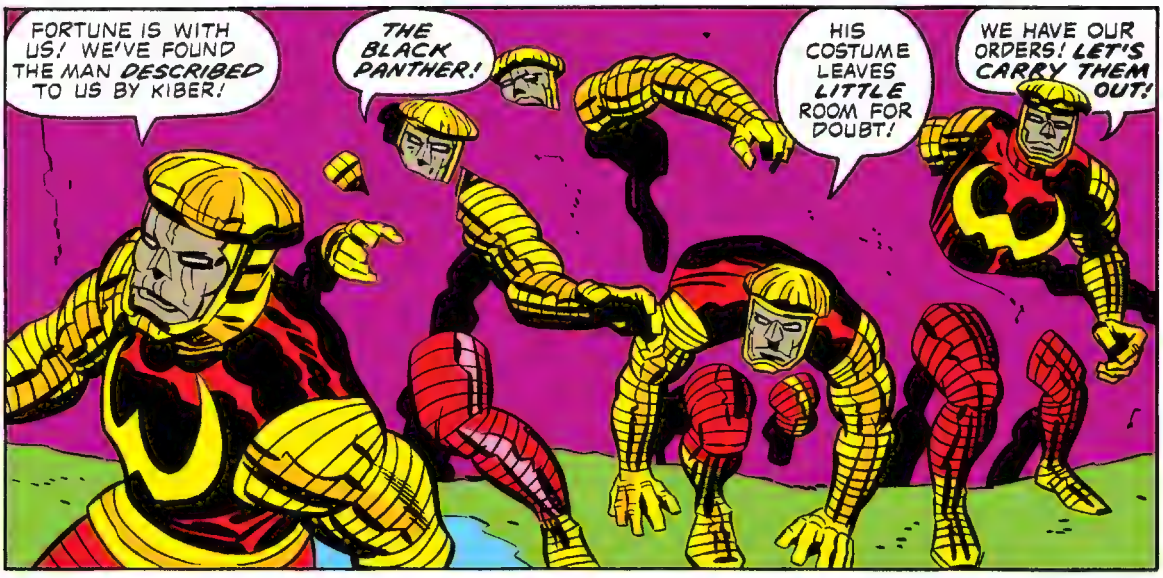

A MOMENT LATER...
WUTZOOM!


AND SO, IT'S DONE ONCE MORE! A WASTEFUL UNIT OF NON-PRODUCTIVE MASS HAS BEEN CONVERTED INTO GLORIOUS ENERGY!
OPEN THE CHAMBER DOOR AND LET THE EXCESS MATTER DRIFT AWAY!


IT'S DONE, KIBER. THE ENERGY TUBE IS READY FOR REMOVAL!

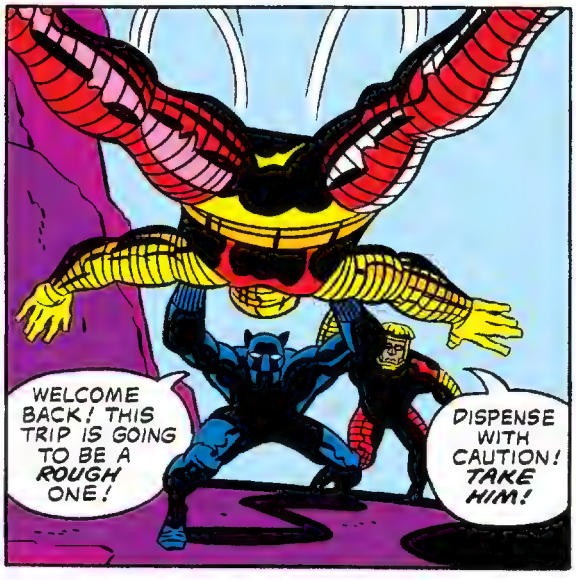
KIBER APPROACHES AS THOUGH MESMERIZED BY THE BRILLIANT GLOW OF THE TUBE···
WHERE IS THE SIGHT TO COMPARE WITH ENERGY IN ITS PUREST FORM? LIFE AND STRENGTH IS IN THAT TUBE!
MY POWER GROWS EACH TIME I FILL THESE TUBES! SOON I'LL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM LEGION!
AND THAT WILL BE THE DAY WHEN I CONTROL THIS PLANET!
I'LL BUILD GIANT STORAGE COMPLEXES AND STOCK THEM WITH YOUR KIND!
DON'T COUNT ON IT, KIBER!
THERE ARE SOME MEN WHO CAN THROW A LONG SHADOW OVER YOUR MAD DREAM! ONE OF THEM IS OF MY OWN FAMILY --A GIANT IN BODY AND SPIRIT!
YOU'VE AROUSED MY INTEREST! THIS MAN--HE MUST BE EXTRAORDINARY INDEED!
WELL, JUST KEEP HIM IN MIND! BECAUSE T'CHALLA WILL BE HERE SOON --TO PULL THIS PLACE DOWN UPON YOUR HEAD!
BRAVO! I MUST SEE THIS MAN! SUCH POWER MUST NOT BE WASTED ON UNCLEAN MATTER!
AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE DOMAIN OF THE PANTHER CULT···
I'LL DO THIS A HUNDRED TIMES IF I HAVE TO-- THIS AREA MUST HOLD A CLUE TO KHANATA'S DISAPPEARANCE!

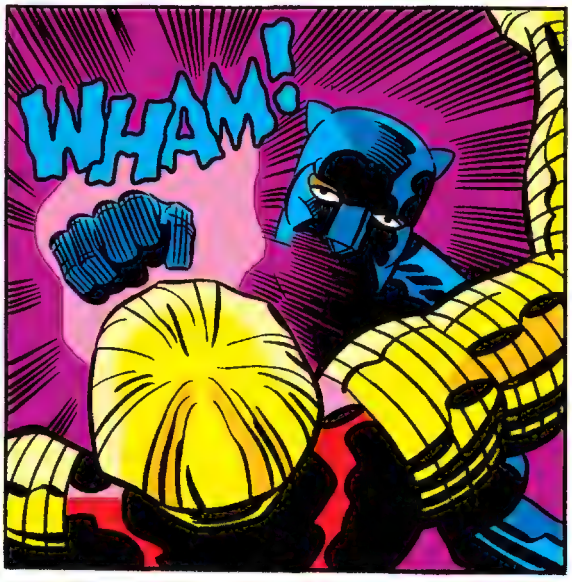
NOTHING...NOT ONE FOOTPRINT OR BROKEN BRANCH!
THE CONCLUSION IS EVER THE SAME. KHANATA WAS TAKEN AT THE BASE OF PANTHER MOUNTAIN!
--AND HERE AMONG THESE ROCKS HE VANISHED WITH HIS ABDUCTORS!
THEY COULDN'T HAVE USED A PLANE OR HELICOPTER. THIS LAND IS SURROUNDED BY HIDDEN SENSORS THAT COULD PICK UP THE MOVEMENTS OF AN INTRUDING GRASSHOPPER!
DO I DARE VOICE WHAT MY MIND TELLS ME IS THE TRUTH?
THEY CAME AND LEFT -- THROUGH THE ROCK!!
IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE, BUT THERE'S NO OTHER EXPLANATION!
WITH THIS POWER AT THEIR COMMAND THERE'S NO BARRIER ON EARTH THAT CAN STOP THEM!
THEY'LL COME AGAIN! AND WHEN THEY DO, I MUST BE READY FOR THEM! FOR ONLY THEY CAN LEAD ME TO KHANATA!

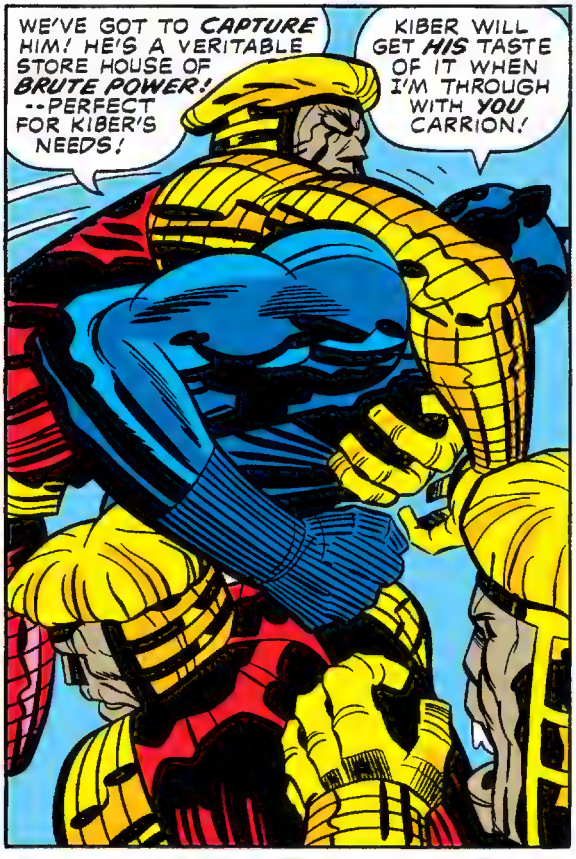

FORTUNE IS WITH US! WE'VE FOUND THE MAN DESCRIBED TO US BY KIBER!
THE BLACK PANTHER!
HIS COSTUME LEAVES LITTLE ROOM FOR DOUBT!
WE HAVE OUR ORDERS! LET'S CARRY THEM OUT!

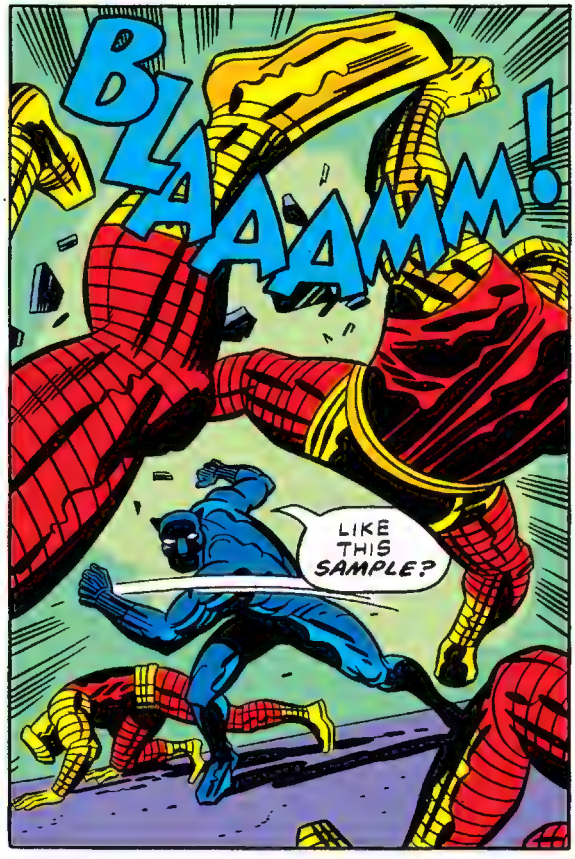
SLOWLY, AND WITH GREAT STEALTH, THE SILENT INTRUDERS CLOSE IN ON THEIR PREY...

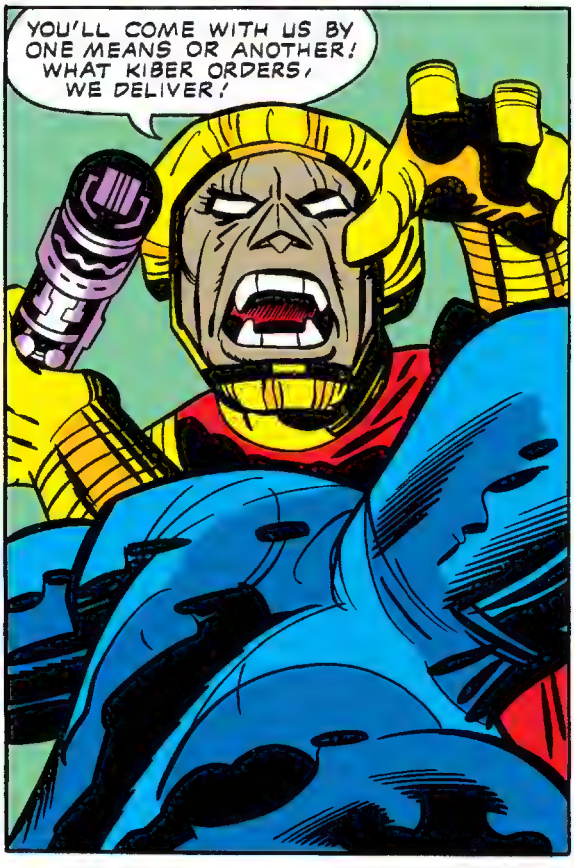
BUT, THEY ARE UNAWARE OF THE SUPER-SENSITIVE MENTAL WAVES WHICH TRACK THEIR EVERY MOVEMENT...
I DIDN'T EXPECT THEM TO RETURN THIS SOON... BUT THEY'LL FIND I CAN MAKE THE MOST OF IT!

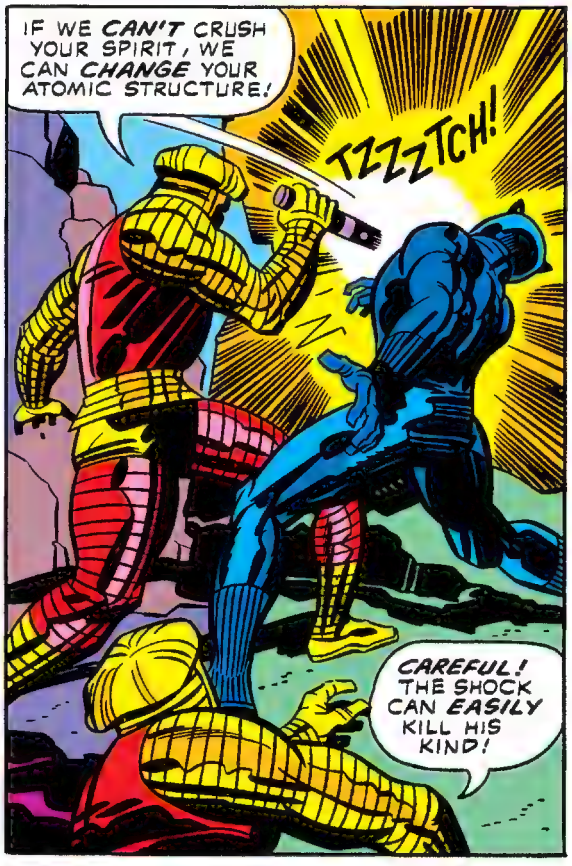

WELCOME BACK! THIS TRIP IS GOING TO BE A ROUGH ONE!
DISPENSE WITH CAUTION! TAKE HIM!

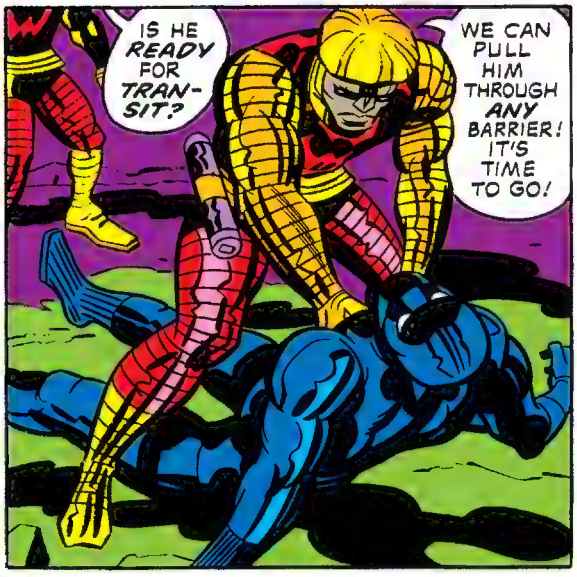

WHAM!

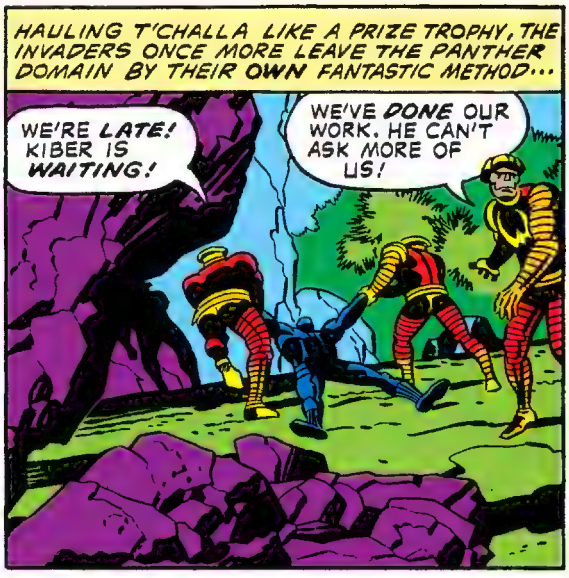

WE'VE GOT TO CAPTURE HIM! HE'S A VERITABLE STORE HOUSE OF BRUTE POWER! --PERFECT FOR KIBER'S NEEDS!
KIBER WILL GET HIS TASTE OF IT WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH YOU CARRION!

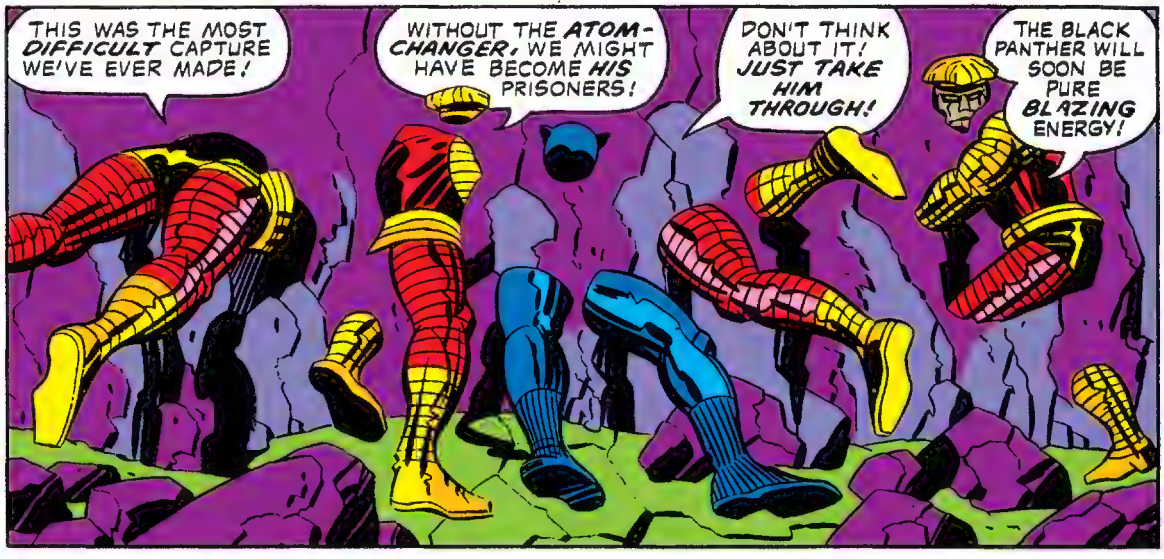

BLAAAMM!
LIKE THIS SAMPLE?

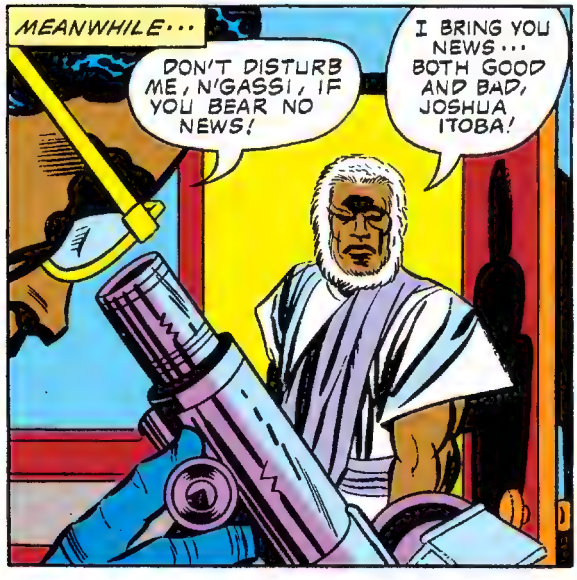

YOU'LL COME WITH US BY ONE MEANS OR ANOTHER! WHAT KIBER ORDERS, WE DELIVER!


IF WE CAN'T CRUSH YOUR SPIRIT, WE CAN CHANGE YOUR ATOMIC STRUCTURE!
TZZZTCH!
CAREFUL! THE SHOCK CAN EASILY KILL HIS KIND!

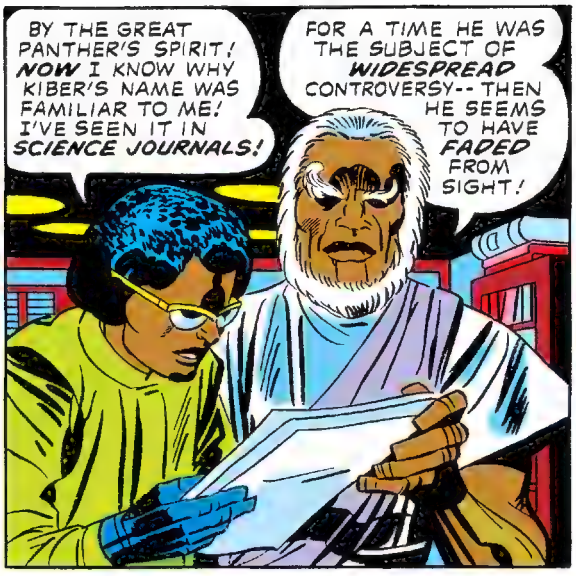

IS HE READY FOR TRANSIT?
WE CAN PULL HIM THROUGH ANY BARRIER! IT'S TIME TO GO!

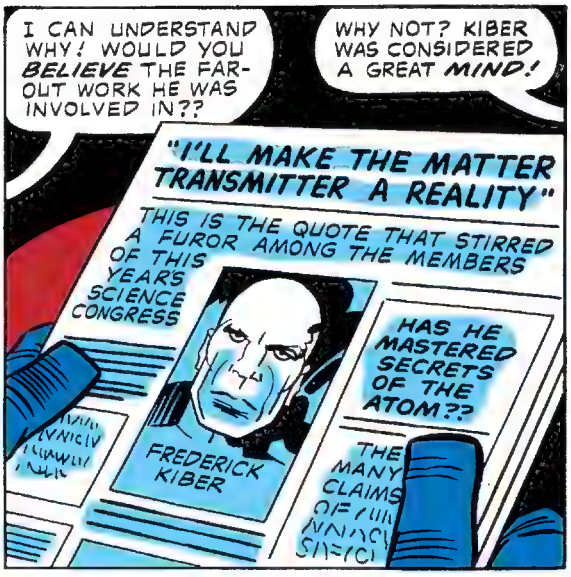

HAULING T'CHALLA LIKE A PRIZE TROPHY, THE INVADERS ONCE MORE LEAVE THE PANTHER DOMAIN BY THEIR OWN FANTASTIC METHOD...
WE'RE LATE! KIBER IS WAITING!
WE'VE DONE OUR WORK. HE CAN'T ASK MORE OF US!


THIS WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT CAPTURE WE'VE EVER MADE!
WITHOUT THE ATOM-CHANGER, WE MIGHT HAVE BECOME HIS PRISONERS!
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT! JUST TAKE HIM THROUGH!
THE BLACK PANTHER WILL SOON BE PURE BLAZING ENERGY!


MEANWHILE...
DON'T DISTURB ME, N'GASSI, IF YOU BEAR NO NEWS!
I BRING YOU NEWS... BOTH GOOD AND BAD, JOSHUA ITOBA!

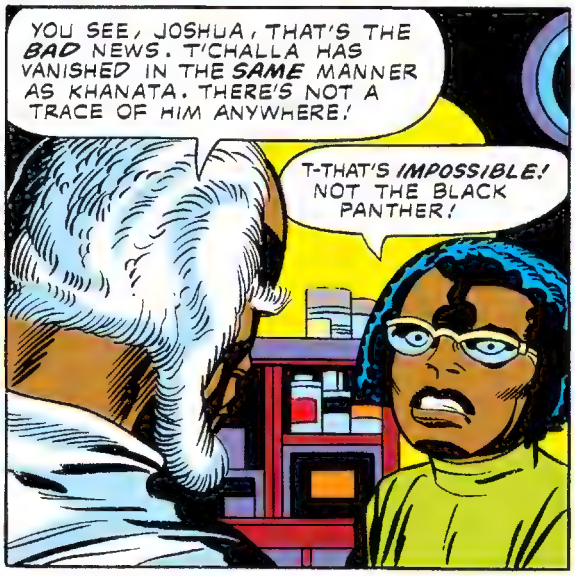
WELL THEN, I MUST KNOW ABOUT KIBER FIRST! HAVE OUR INFORMATION SOURCES GIVEN US ANY DETAILS ABOUT THAT?
THEY'VE BEEN VERY THOROUGH! HE'S NO LONGER A MYSTERY!

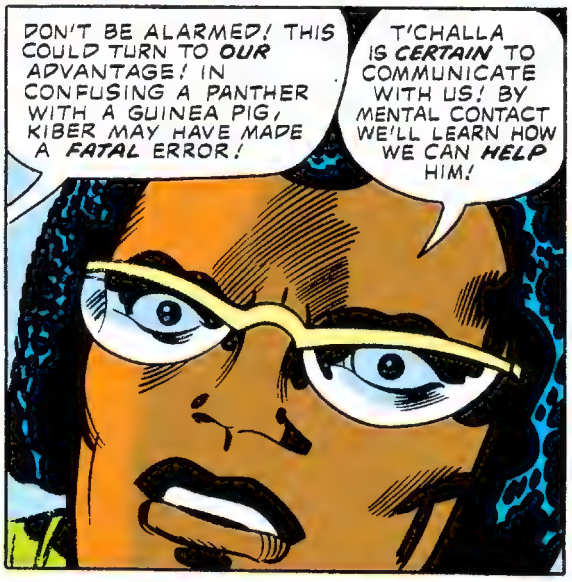

BY THE GREAT PANTHER'S SPIRIT! NOW I KNOW WHY KIBER'S NAME WAS FAMILIAR TO ME! I'VE SEEN IT IN SCIENCE JOURNALS!
FOR A TIME HE WAS THE SUBJECT OF WIDESPREAD CONTROVERSY-- THEN HE SEEMS TO HAVE FADED FROM SIGHT!

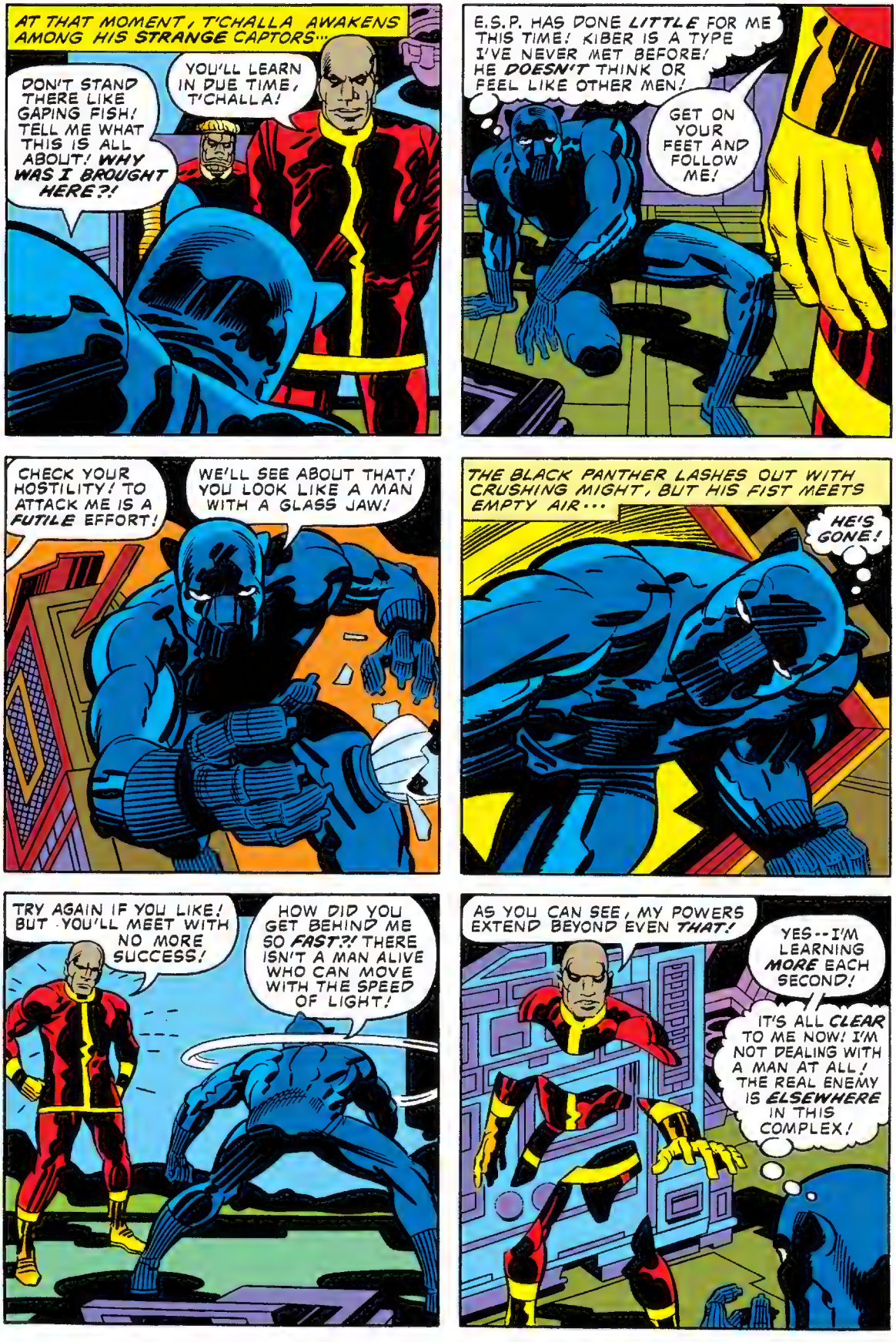

I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY! WOULD YOU BELIEVE THE FAR-OUT WORK HE WAS INVOLVED IN??
WHY NOT? KIBER WAS CONSIDERED A GREAT MIND!
"I'LL MAKE THE MATTER TRANSMITTER A REALITY"
THIS IS THE QUOTE THAT STIRRED A FUROR AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THIS YEARS SCIENCE CONGRESS
FREDERICK KIBER
HAS HE MASTERED SECRETS OF THE ATOM??
THE MANY CLAIMS OF

WHAT'S MORE, I BELIEVE THAT HIS MATTER-MACHINE IS ACTUALLY IN OPERATION! IT REACHED INTO THIS DOMAIN--AND TOOK KHANATA!
OF COURSE! THERE'S NO OTHER WAY IT COULD HAVE HAPPENED!

YOU'VE DONE WELL, N'GASSI! THIS INFORMATION MUST BE GIVEN TO T'CHALLA AT ONCE!
I THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE I CAME TO YOU-- BUT HE WAS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND!


YOU SEE, JOSHUA, THAT'S THE BAD NEWS. T'CHALLA HAS VANISHED IN THE SAME MANNER AS KHANATA. THERE'S NOT A TRACE OF HIM ANYWHERE!
T-THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NOT THE BLACK PANTHER!

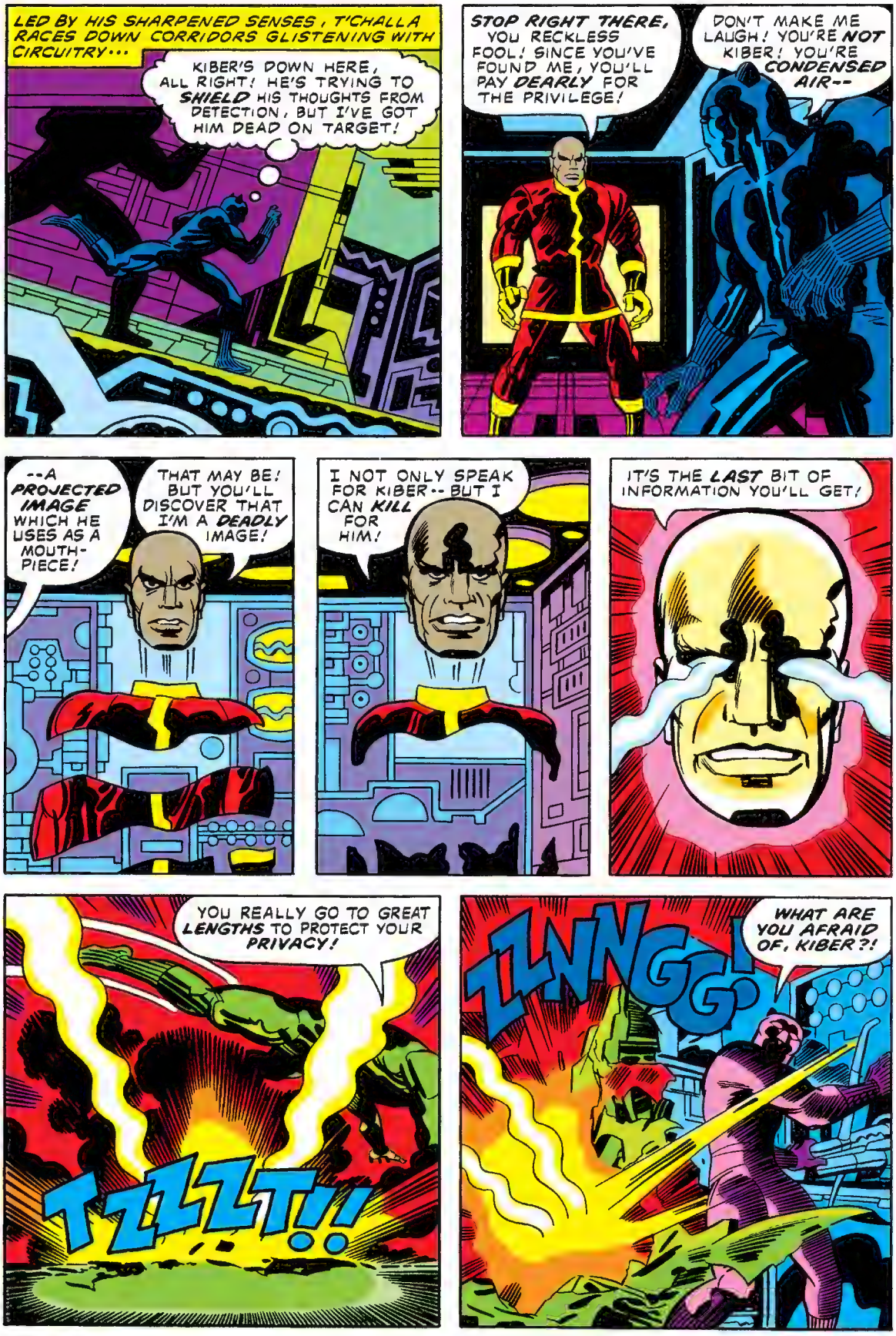

DON'T BE ALARMED! THIS COULD TURN TO OUR ADVANTAGE! IN CONFUSING A PANTHER WITH A GUINEA PIG, KIBER MAY HAVE MADE A FATAL ERROR!
T'CHALLA IS CERTAIN TO COMMUNICATE WITH US! BY MENTAL CONTACT WE'LL LEARN HOW WE CAN HELP HIM!


AT THAT MOMENT, T'CHALLA AWAKENS AMONG HIS STRANGE CAPTORS...
DON'T STAND THERE LIKE GAPING FISH! TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT! WHY WAS I BROUGHT HERE?!
YOU'LL LEARN IN DUE TIME, T'CHALLA!
E.S.P. HAS DONE LITTLE FOR ME THIS TIME! KIBER IS A TYPE I'VE NEVER MET BEFORE! HE DOESN'T THINK OR FEEL LIKE OTHER MEN!
GET ON YOUR FEET AND FOLLOW ME!
CHECK YOUR HOSTILITY! TO ATTACK ME IS A FUTILE EFFORT!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! YOU LOOK LIKE A MAN WITH A GLASS JAW!
THE BLACK PANTHER LASHES OUT WITH CRUSHING MIGHT, BUT HIS FIST MEETS EMPTY AIR...
HE'S GONE!
TRY AGAIN IF YOU LIKE! BUT YOU'LL MEET WITH NO MORE SUCCESS!
HOW DID YOU GET BEHIND ME SO FAST?! THERE ISN'T A MAN ALIVE WHO CAN MOVE WITH THE SPEED OF LIGHT!
AS YOU CAN SEE, MY POWERS EXTEND BEYOND EVEN THAT!
YES--I'M LEARNING MORE EACH SECOND!
IT'S ALL CLEAR TO ME NOW! I'M NOT DEALING WITH A MAN AT ALL! THE REAL ENEMY IS ELSEWHERE IN THIS COMPLEX!

YOU'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO MY BIDDING, T'CHALLA! RESIGN YOURSELF TO THAT!
I'LL KEEP MY TEMPER FOR THE PRESENT! NOW, LET ME SEE THE KIND OF SHOW YOU'RE RUNNING!
EASILY DONE! IT'S ALL IN THERE!
IS THAT CABINET WITH THE TUBE ON TOP THE MAIN FEATURE ON YOUR PROGRAM?
IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING --IT IS THE PROGRAM!
AND YOU, T'CHALLA, SHALL BE THE MOST SPECTACULAR FEATURE WE'VE HAD HERE!
IT'S TIME TO ACT, BUT I NEED SOME KIND OF DIVERSION···
T'CHALLA! T'CHALLA!!
HERE I AM, GREAT PANTHER! TRAPPED IN THIS PIGPEN!
SO···THAT'S YOUR BIG HERO, IS IT?
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN AS MUCH TROUBLE AS WE ARE!
AT THAT MOMENT, T'CHALLA BEAMS A MIND-WAVE AT HIS COUSIN···
KHANATA! SET THOSE MEN TO BREAK OUT OF THERE!
YOU CAN DO IT! YOU MUST DO IT!
HE'S LOOKING STRAIGHT AT US, BUT HE'S DOING NOTHING TO HELP!
I'VE JUST RECEIVED HIS THOUGHTS!
HE WANTS US TO BREAK OUT!
NO CHANCE!

YOUR SUPER-PANTHER IS NOTHING BUT A PAPER POODLE! HE'S SUPPOSED TO HELP US--NOT VICE-VERSA!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HELPING EACH OTHER? I DON'T KNOW WHAT T'CHALLA'S PLAN IS, BUT IT COULD MEAN AN END TO KIBER!
I JUST WANT TO GET OUT!
THEN, LET'S DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!! WE CAN ALL GET OUT IF WE ACT AS ONE INSTEAD OF DYING SEPARATELY!
IF KIBER'S GUARDS DON'T KILL US, HIS WEAPONS WILL!
YOU KNOW IT, BROTHER!
IF YOU AND THIS T'CHALLA WANT TO PLAY WAR GAMES, GO RIGHT AHEAD!
ALL RIGHT, THEN! SLINK OFF TO YOUR CORNERS AND WAIT FOR THE GUARDS TO COME--AND ONE BY ONE YOU'LL VANISH INTO THAT IRON BOX AND COME OUT AS CHEAP VOLTAGE!
WE'RE NOTHING BUT FUEL TO KIBER! WHEN HE'S THROUGH WITH US HE'LL CAPTURE OTHERS UNTIL HE DESTROYS HUMANITY!
MUST WE LET HIM DO IT WITHOUT A FIGHT? MUST WE GO TO OUR DEATHS LIKE SHEEP?
SUDDENLY...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!!
POW!
CRAASH!
BAM!

SECONDS LATER, THE CAPTIVES BURST FREE...
OUT OF MY WAY!
STOP THEM!
THAT'S MY CUE! I'M LEAVING YOU HYENAS!
KRAK!
SMASH!
THE REAL KIBER IS THE KEY TO THIS MAD SET-UP! WHAT I MET WAS JUST A PROJECTED IMAGE MADE UP OF ASSORTED ATOM CLUSTERS!
COME BACK! THIS PASSAGE IS FORBIDDEN TO ALL!
YOU'LL DIE FOR THIS!
I'LL TAKE THAT RISK!


LED BY HIS SHARPENED SENSES, T'CHALLA RACES DOWN CORRIDORS GLISTENING WITH CIRCUITRY...
KIBER'S DOWN HERE, ALL RIGHT! HE'S TRYING TO SHIELD HIS THOUGHTS FROM DETECTION, BUT I'VE GOT HIM DEAD ON TARGET!
STOP RIGHT THERE, YOU RECKLESS FOOL! SINCE YOU'VE FOUND ME, YOU'LL PAY DEARLY FOR THE PRIVILEGE!
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! YOU'RE NOT KIBER! YOU'RE CONDENSED AIR--
--A PROJECTED IMAGE WHICH HE USES AS A MOUTH-PIECE!
THAT MAY BE! BUT YOU'LL DISCOVER THAT I'M A DEADLY IMAGE!
I NOT ONLY SPEAK FOR KIBER -- BUT I CAN KILL FOR HIM!
IT'S THE LAST BIT OF INFORMATION YOU'LL GET!
YOU REALLY GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY!
TZZZT!!
ZLNNGG!
WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF, KIBER?!

YOU'RE NOT INVINCIBLE! YOU'RE VULNERABLE --A SITTING DUCK, FEARFUL OF ATTACK!
EVEN YOUR IMAGE CAN BE SHORTED OUT BY CONTACT WITH IRON!
TSSSST!!
SO MUCH FOR YOUR IMPRESSIVE FACADE OF ATOMIC GIMMICKRY!
NOW, LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT YOU AS YOU REALLY ARE! LET ME SEE THE THING THAT CALLS ITSELF KIBER!
I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE-- ALONE AND AFRAID!
YOU'RE AFRAID BECAUSE YOU'RE BIG AND CLUMSY --AND YOU CAN'T MOVE-- YOU'RE ANCHORED TO THE GROUND!
RRRRRRRR
I'VE GOT YOU-- KIBER!!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE FINAL CHAPTER
(PLUS A NEW WRITER, A NEW ARTIST AND MORE!)

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BLACK PANTHER™

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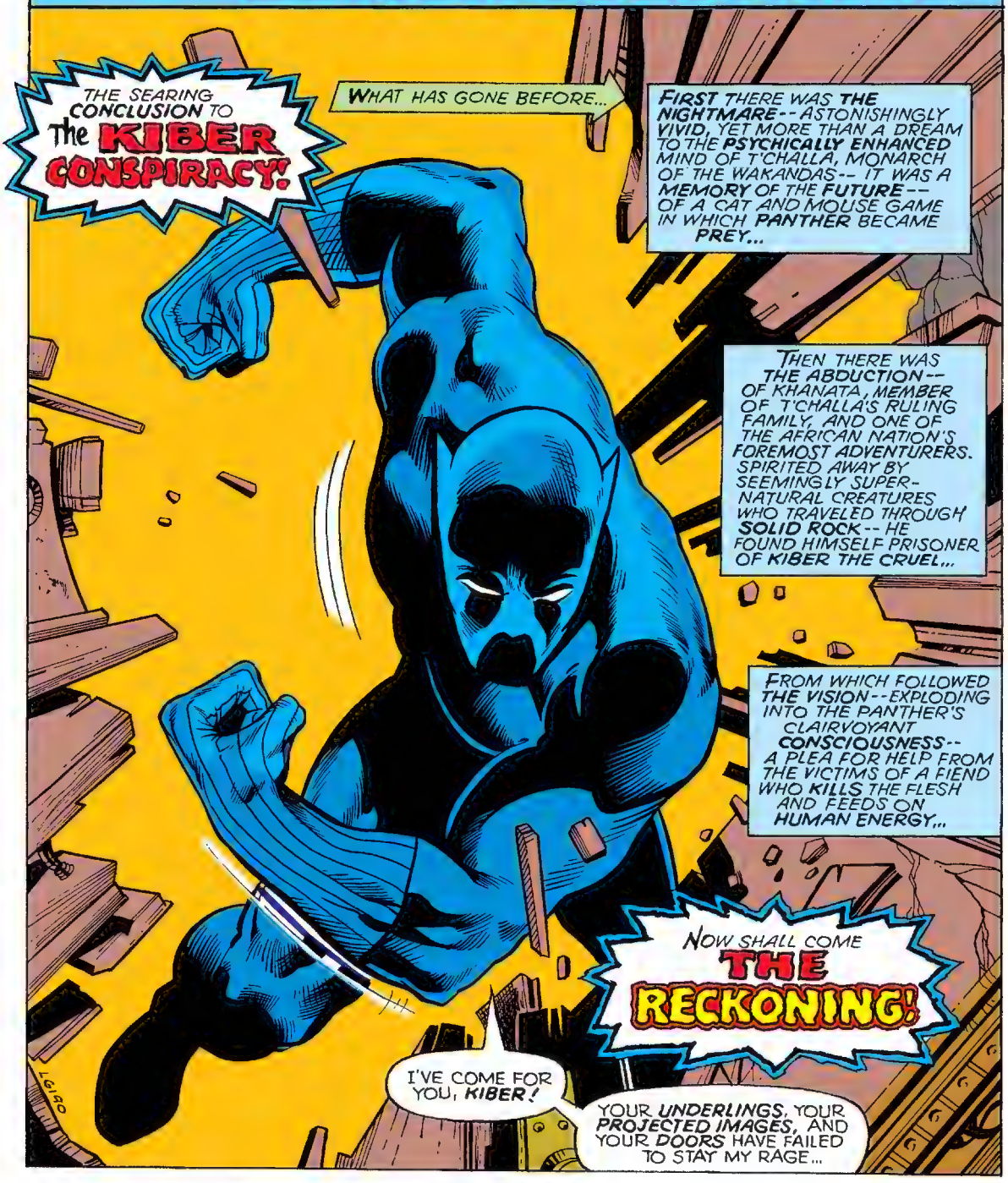
TRAPPED ON A WINDSWEPT SUMMIT--BESIEGED BY THE WRAITH-SOLDIERS OF KIBER THE CRUEL, THE PANTHER BATTLES ALONE!

...AND THERE SHALL COME A RECKONING!

BINGHAM / LAYTON

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™


THE SEARING CONCLUSION TO The KIBER CONSPIRACY!
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE...
FIRST THERE WAS THE NIGHTMARE--ASTONISHINGLY VIVID, YET MORE THAN A DREAM TO THE PSYCHICALLY ENHANCED MIND OF T'CHALLA, MONARCH OF THE WAKANDAS-- IT WAS A MEMORY OF THE FUTURE-- OF A CAT AND MOUSE GAME IN WHICH PANTHER BECAME PREY...
THEN THERE WAS THE ABDUCTION-- OF KHANATA, MEMBER OF T'CHALLA'S RULING FAMILY, AND ONE OF THE AFRICAN NATION'S FOREMOST ADVENTURERS. SPIRITED AWAY BY SEEMINGLY SUPER-NATURAL CREATURES WHO TRAVELED THROUGH SOLID ROCK-- HE FOUND HIMSELF PRISONER OF KIBER THE CRUEL...
FROM WHICH FOLLOWED THE VISION--EXPLODING INTO THE PANTHER'S CLAIRVOYANT CONSCIOUSNESS-- A PLEA FOR HELP FROM THE VICTIMS OF A FIEND WHO KILLS THE FLESH AND FEEDS ON HUMAN ENERGY...
NOW SHALL COME THE RECKONING!
I'VE COME FOR YOU, KIBER!
YOUR UNDERLINGS, YOUR PROJECTED IMAGES, AND YOUR DOORS HAVE FAILED TO STAY MY RAGE...
LG/SO

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"WHAT IS...

...AND NOW I'VE GOT YOU!

SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS--SO THAT'S WHAT YOU REALLY LOOK LIKE!

NOT A BIT LIKE THE PERFECT SPECIMEN DEPICTED BY YOUR HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION!

YYESS ∃kurruk∈ BLACK PANNTHERR... YYOU SSEE ∃puk∈ ME AS I RREALLY AMM... THE RRESULT ∃urk∈ OF MY EXXPERIMENTS WITH MATTERR TRRANSMISSION!

PHYSICALLY DESTRROYEDD--MERGED AND MIS∃ruk∈SHAPEN--BONNDED PERMANENTLY WITH THE MOLECULARR SSTRRUCTURRE OF THE ∃kurruk∈ FLOOR...

...AND SWOLLEN TO GIGANNTICC PROPORTIONS BY MY ATTEMPTS TO SATE MY GNAWING ∃urk∈ APPETITE!

IT'S A PITY YOU ∃urk∈ SHORTED OUT MY PROJECTED IMAGE ∃urr∈-- FOR IT GAVE VOICE AS WELL AS FORM TO KKIBERR--AND I HAVE ∃urk∈ MUCH TO DISSCUSSS WITH YYOU.

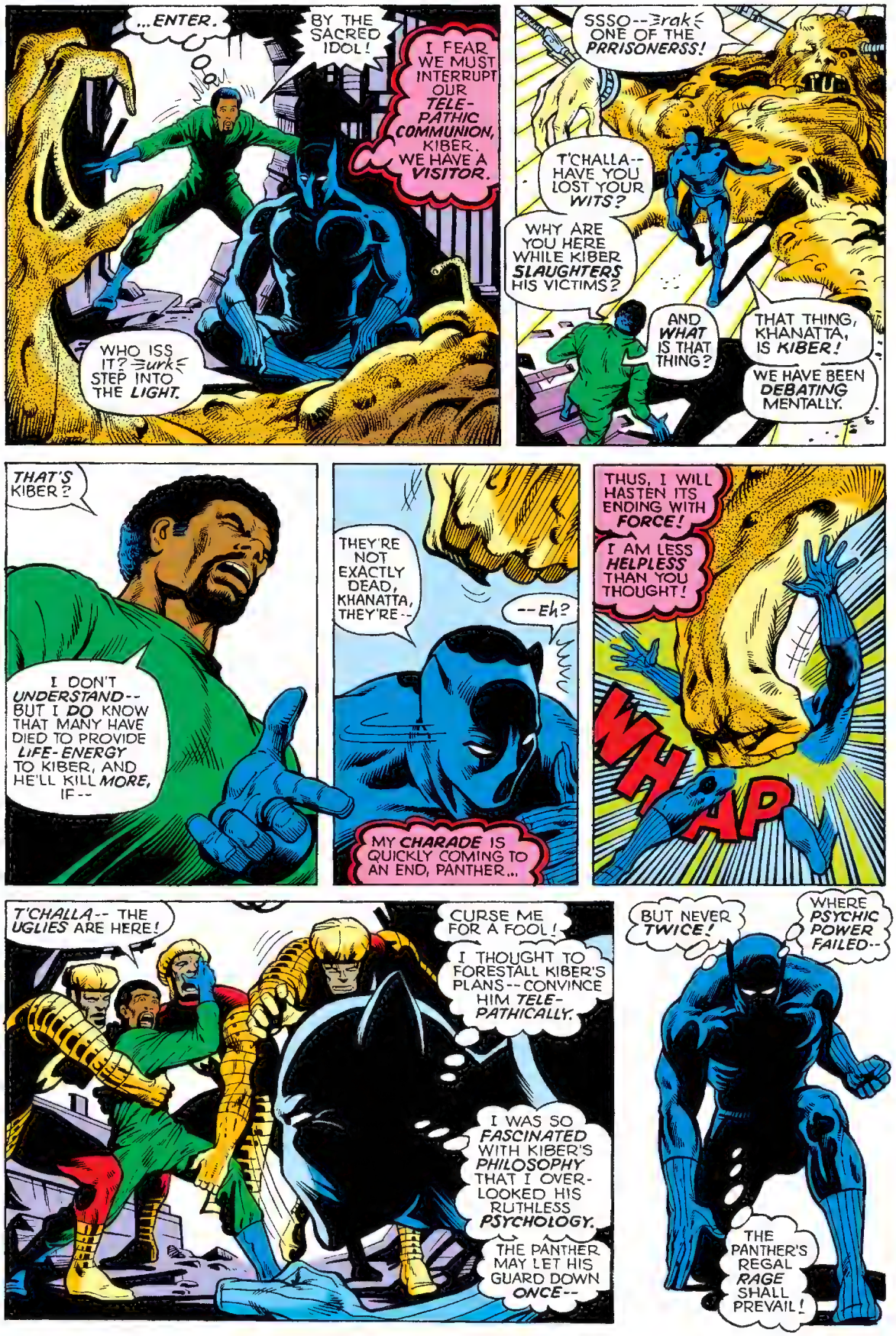
THOUGH, PERRHAPS YOU CAN PROVIDE LESS TORTUROUSS MEANS OF ∃urk∈ COMMUNCATION?

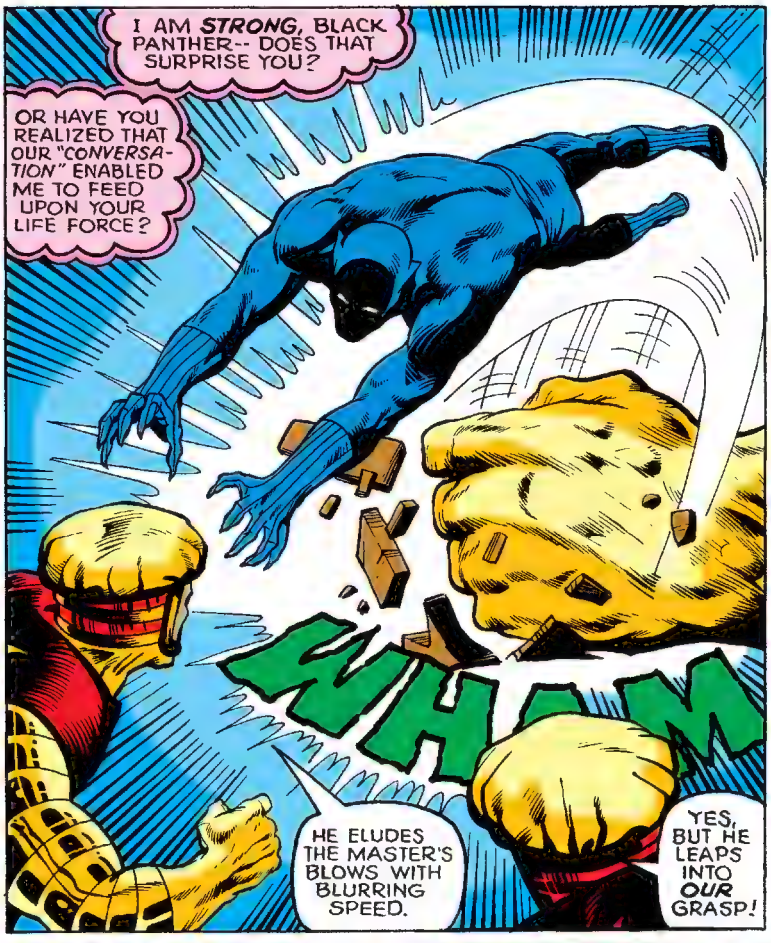
IN HIS MIND THE PANTHER REPLIES--AND KIBER HEARS!

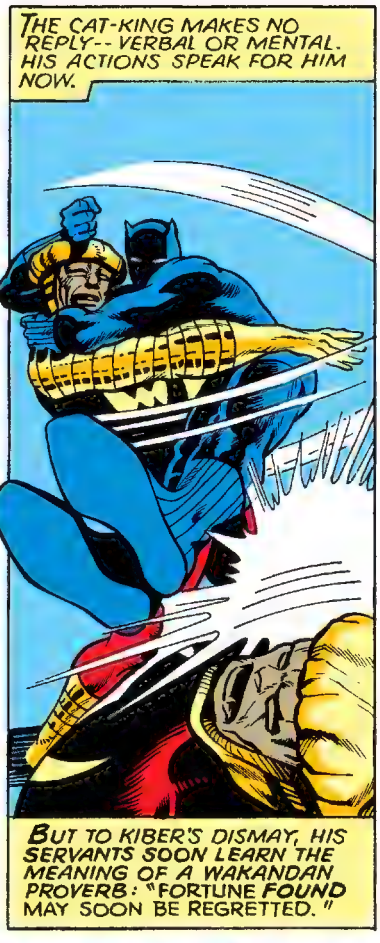
PLOT- JIM SHOOTER | ART- JERRY BINGHAM
SCRIPT-ED HANNIGAN | INKS- GENE DAY
lettering- ORZECHOWSKI • coloring- FRANCOISE
ROGER STERN, EDITOR J. SHOOTER, ED. IN CH.

...AND WHAT SHOULD NEVER BE"

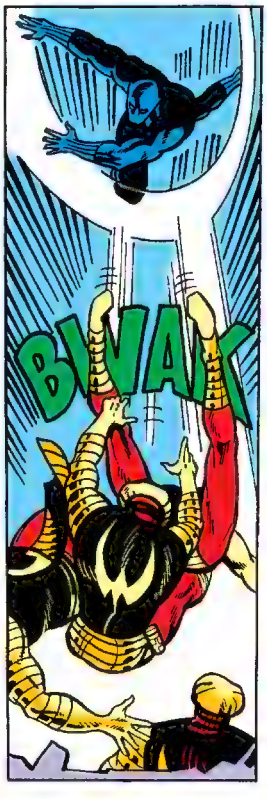
MEANWHILE, IN A ROOM NOT FAR FROM KIBER'S LABORATORY...
...THE REVOLUTION IS GOING BADLY.
FOOLISH PRISONERS.
TO RESIST KIBER'S WILL IS TO DIE WITHOUT PURPOSE!
THEY'RE RIGHT, KHANATA-- THIS FIGHT IS USELESS!
WHERE IS YOUR GREAT PANTHER WHILE WE BLEED?
AARRRGH!
I DON'T KNOW! T'CHALLA IMPLORED US TO START THIS RESISTANCE AS A DIVERSION-- IN THE HOPE THAT HE COULD FIND A WAY TO FREE US.
BUT WHAT IF THE PANTHER HIMSELF WAS DEFEATED BY KIBER?!
AT ANY RATE, HE MUST BE ALIVE-- KIBER HAS TOO MUCH NEED OF T'CHALLA'S LIFE ENERGY TO JUST KILL HIM OFF.
THE DIVERSION WAS A GOOD IDEA.
AT LEAST ONE OF US CAN SLIP AWAY!
NOT FOR LONG, THOUGH, IF I KNOW KIBER'S GOONS!
THEY CAN TRAVERSE THROUGH ANY WALL LIKE GHOSTS!
YET, THIS PLACE DOES HAVE BOTH HALL-WAYS AND DOORS.
AND THERE'S A DOOR THAT LOOKS LIKE IT'S MET A PANTHER!
IT MUST BE KIBER'S PRIVATE CHAMBER!
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT IT ALL-- NO SOUND.
IS THE KING OF THE WAKANDAS TRULY DEAD?
I MUST FIND OUT NO MATTER WHAT THE DANGER!
AS A MEMBER OF THE PANTHER COURT IT IS MY DUTY TO...


...ENTER.
BY THE SACRED IDOL!
I FEAR WE MUST INTERRUPT OUR TELE-PATHIC COMMUNION, KIBER. WE HAVE A VISITOR.
WHO ISS IT? ∃urk∈ STEP INTO THE LIGHT.
SSSO--∃rak∈ ONE OF THE PRRISONERSS!
T'CHALLA--HAVE YOU LOST YOUR WITS?
WHY ARE YOU HERE WHILE KIBER SLAUGHTERS HIS VICTIMS?
AND WHAT IS THAT THING?
THAT THING, KHANATTA, IS KIBER!
WE HAVE BEEN DEBATING MENTALLY.
THAT'S KIBER?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND--BUT I DO KNOW THAT MANY HAVE DIED TO PROVIDE LIFE-ENERGY TO KIBER, AND HE'LL KILL MORE, IF--
THEY'RE NOT EXACTLY DEAD, KHANATTA, THEY'RE--
--Eh?
MY CHARADE IS QUICKLY COMING TO AN END, PANTHER...
THUS, I WILL HASTEN ITS ENDING WITH FORCE!
I AM LESS HELPLESS THAN YOU THOUGHT!
WHAP
T'CHALLA-- THE UGLIES ARE HERE!
CURSE ME FOR A FOOL!
I THOUGHT TO FORESTALL KIBER'S PLANS--CONVINCE HIM TELE-PATHICALLY.
I WAS SO FASCINATED WITH KIBER'S PHILOSOPHY THAT I OVER-LOOKED HIS RUTHLESS PSYCHOLOGY.
THE PANTHER MAY LET HIS GUARD DOWN ONCE--
BUT NEVER TWICE!
WHERE PSYCHIC POWER FAILED--
THE PANTHER'S REGAL RAGE SHALL PREVAIL!

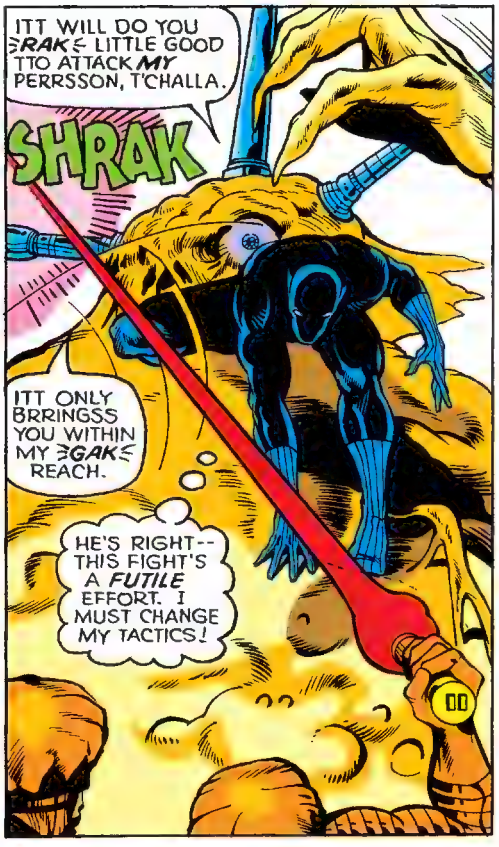

I AM STRONG, BLACK PANTHER-- DOES THAT SURPRISE YOU?
OR HAVE YOU REALIZED THAT OUR "CONVERSATION" ENABLED ME TO FEED UPON YOUR LIFE FORCE?
WHAM
HE ELUDES THE MASTER'S BLOWS WITH BLURRING SPEED.
YES, BUT HE LEAPS INTO OUR GRASP!


THE CAT-KING MAKES NO REPLY-- VERBAL OR MENTAL. HIS ACTIONS SPEAK FOR HIM NOW.
BUT TO KIBER'S DISMAY, HIS SERVANTS SOON LEARN THE MEANING OF A WAKANDAN PROVERB: "FORTUNE FOUND MAY SOON BE REGRETTED."

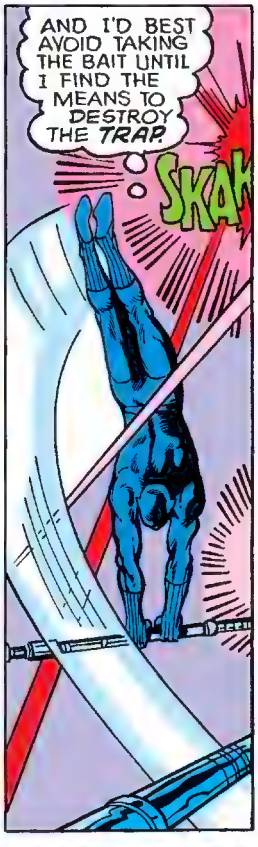
AAAARRG!
OTHERS ARE EAGER TO LEARN, TOO--
GRAB HIM!
URRUK! PROTECT ME, YOU SSLUGGARRDSS.


BIVAK

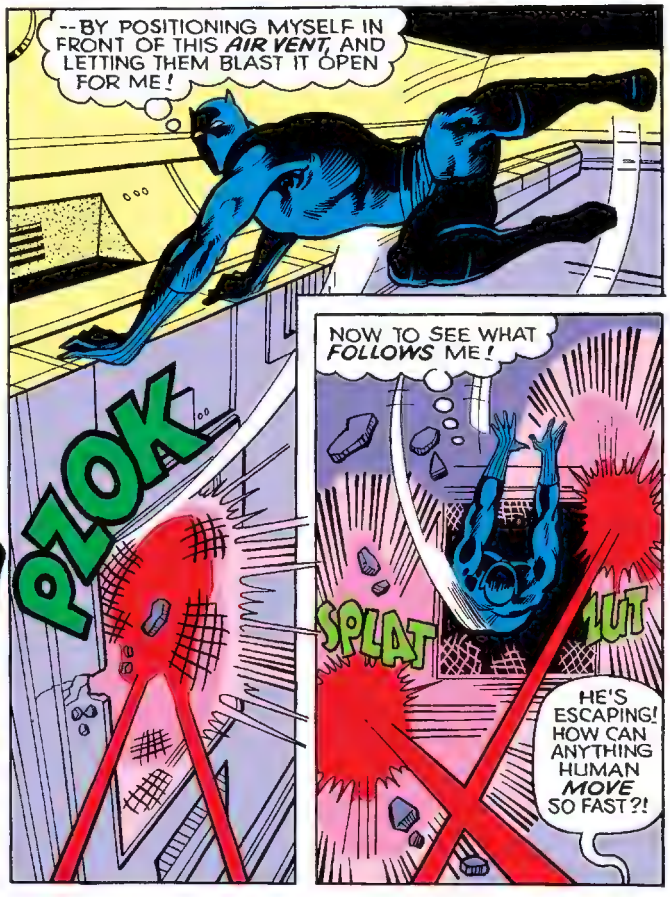
FZ-PP!
LASER BLASTS!
THEY JUST DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP.


ITT WILL DO YOU ƎRAK≤ LITTLE GOOD TTO ATTACK MY PERRSSON, T'CHALLA.
SHRAK
ITT ONLY BRRINGSS YOU WITHIN MY ƎGAK≤ REACH.
HE'S RIGHT-- THIS FIGHT'S A FUTILE EFFORT. I MUST CHANGE MY TACTICS!

I COULD SPEND ALL DAY BATTLING KIBER'S MINIONS-- HE'D ONLY CALL IN MORE TO REPLACE THOSE I DEFEAT.
KIBER HIMSELF IS MERELY THE BAIT IN THIS SITUATION.


AND I'D BEST AVOID TAKING THE BAIT UNTIL I FIND THE MEANS TO DESTROY THE TRAP.
SKAK

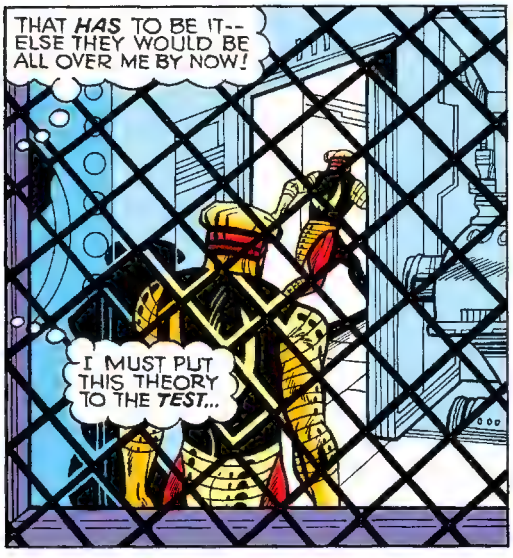
I'LL OPERATE MORE EFFICIENTLY ONCE I'M OUT OF THIS ROOM.
ZAK
AND I THINK I CAN GET THE UGLIES TO HELP ME OUT--


--BY POSITIONING MYSELF IN FRONT OF THIS AIR VENT, AND LETTING THEM BLAST IT OPEN FOR ME!
PZOK
NOW TO SEE WHAT FOLLOWS ME!
SPLAT
LUT
HE'S ESCAPING! HOW CAN ANYTHING HUMAN MOVE SO FAST?!

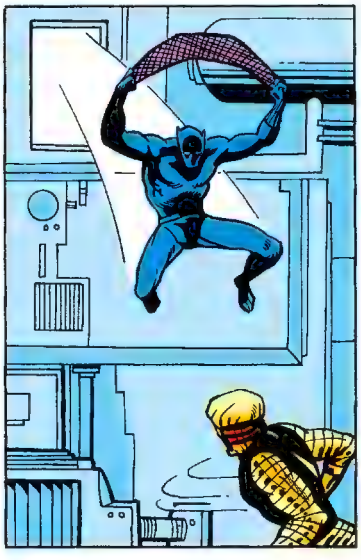
FOOLSS -- DON'T SSTAND THERE =RUK= THE PANTHERR MUSST BE LOCATED--
--AND KILLED!

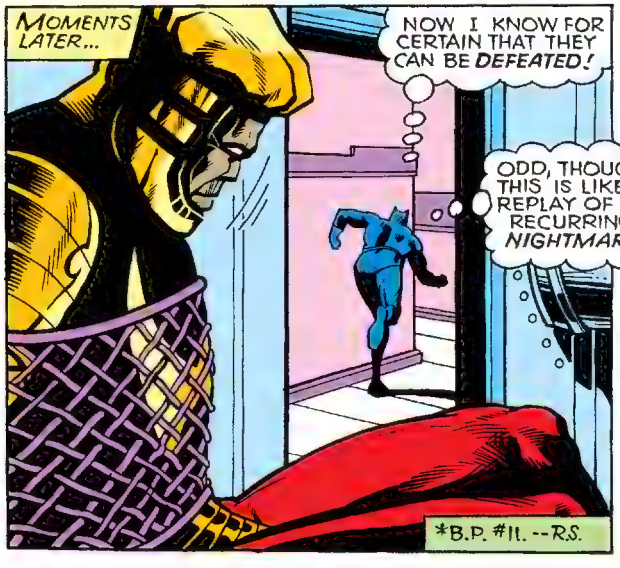
AND, WHILE KIBER RANTS...
I'VE LOST THEM, BUT HOW?
KIBER'S MEN CAN BECOME UNSOLID--WALK THROUGH WALLS LIKE MY FELLOW AVENGER, THE VISION.

UNLESS... THERE ARE SOME MATERIALS THROUGH WHICH THEY CANNOT PASS!
... AND PERHAPS THIS AIRSHAFT IS MADE OF SUCH MATERIAL!


THAT HAS TO BE IT-- ELSE THEY WOULD BE ALL OVER ME BY NOW!
I MUST PUT THIS THEORY TO THE TEST...

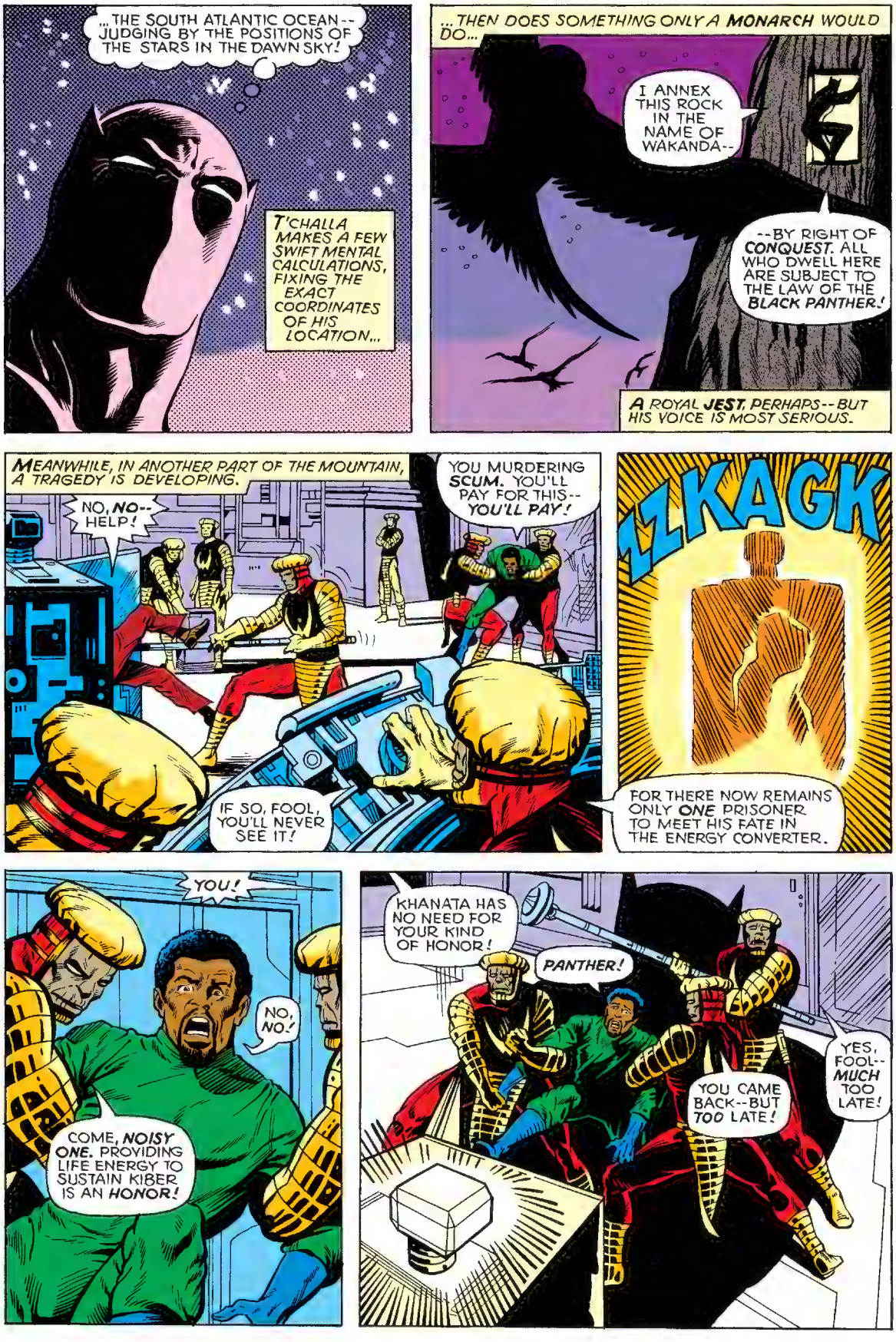
RRAKK
WHAT?!
WHO'S THERE?!




MOMENTS LATER...
NOW I KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT THEY CAN BE DEFEATED!
ODD, THOUGH-- THIS IS LIKE A REPLAY OF MY RECURRING NIGHTMARE.*
*B.P. #11. --RS.

I TOOK THE DREAM TO BE A PREMONITION OF THE FUTURE, SEEN VIA MY NEW-FOUND PSYCHIC POWERS.
AND SO IT IS-- BUT WITH A DIFFERENCE-- A DIVERGENCE. I COULDN'T WIN IN THE DREAM--BUT I CAN WIN IN REALITY--I CAN FEEL IT.

I'LL DELAY PONDERING WHY THE TELEPATHIC ABILITIES I GAINED IN THE VIBRANIUM MOUND ACCIDENT*ARE LESS THAN TOTALLY ACCURATE.
FOR NOW--THAT DOOR MUST LEAD TO SOMEPLACE IMPORTANT, JUDGING BY THOSE GUARDS.
*B.P. #10--ROG.
SOK
THUS, THE PANTHER MUST GAIN ENTRY.
A SECOND'S WORTH OF CONFLICT, AND...
I'M INSIDE--
--AND NOW--
-- I'M OUTSIDE!
THAT'S WHY THE DOOR WAS SO HEAVILY GUARDED--THIS MUST BE THE ONLY PHYSICAL EXIT TO THIS PLACE.
AND WHAT A PLACE--
--A BARREN PEAK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TRACKLESS OCEAN...

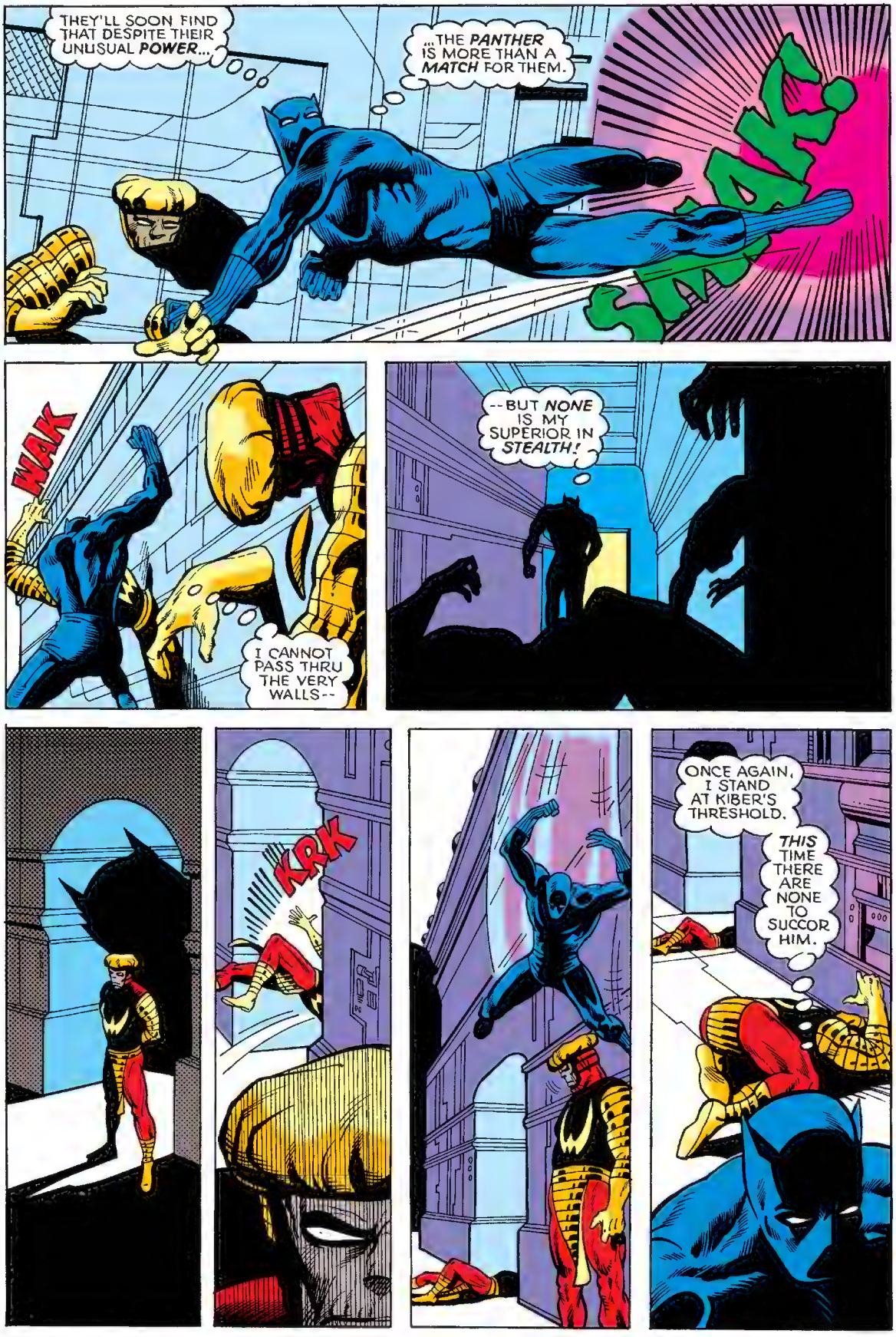

...THE SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN--JUDGING BY THE POSITIONS OF THE STARS IN THE DAWN SKY!
T'CHALLA MAKES A FEW SWIFT MENTAL CALCULATIONS, FIXING THE EXACT COORDINATES OF HIS LOCATION...
...THEN DOES SOMETHING ONLY A MONARCH WOULD DO...
I ANNEX THIS ROCK IN THE NAME OF WAKANDA--
--BY RIGHT OF CONQUEST. ALL WHO DWELL HERE ARE SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF THE BLACK PANTHER!
A ROYAL JEST, PERHAPS--BUT HIS VOICE IS MOST SERIOUS.
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE MOUNTAIN, A TRAGEDY IS DEVELOPING.
NO, NO--HELP!
YOU MURDERING SCUM. YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS--YOU'LL PAY!
IF SO, FOOL, YOU'LL NEVER SEE IT!
IZKAGK
FOR THERE NOW REMAINS ONLY ONE PRISONER TO MEET HIS FATE IN THE ENERGY CONVERTER.
YOU!
NO, NO!
COME, NOISY ONE. PROVIDING LIFE ENERGY TO SUSTAIN KIBER IS AN HONOR!
KHANATA HAS NO NEED FOR YOUR KIND OF HONOR!
PANTHER!
YES, FOOL--MUCH TOO LATE!
YOU CAME BACK--BUT TOO LATE!

IT'S JUST WHAT I FEARED!
IN A FINAL FIT OF DESPERATION, KIBER'S MEN HAVE FED ALL THE REMAINING PRISONERS INTO THE CONVERTER!
THEY MUST BE AVENGED!
PERHAPS THE STRANGE BEINGS SENSE THE INTENSITY OF T'CHALLA'S COLD FURY...
... A FURY THEY CANNOT STAND AGAINST!
CRAK
WOP
CHUD
KPOW
AND THOUGH THEIR NUMBERS BE MANY...

...THEY ARE TRULY OUTMANNED!
KRAK
THIS IS THE LAST ONE.
AARGGH!
GRAK!
IT'LL BE SECONDS BEFORE MORE ARRIVE.
HERE THEY COME.
GET HIM BEFORE HE DESTROYS THE CONVERTER!
MY PSI-SENSES INDICATE THAT THE CHARGED E-GLOBE NO LONGER CONTAINS THE MENTAL PROCESSES OF THE CONVERTED PRISONERS.
WHICH MEANS THAT THEIR LIFE-ESSENCE HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED ELSEWHERE...
...LEAVING THE NON-SENTIENT RESIDUAL ENERGY!
ENERGY USELESS TO KIBER--YET, PERFECT FOR MY PURPOSES!
KA-WHOOM!
IF THE ORIGINAL POSSESSORS OF THIS LIFE-FORCE CAN'T BE RETURNED--AT LEAST PART OF THEIR BEING WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN DESTROYING THEIR TORMENTERS!

AN AFTERMATH OF ECHOES...
... AND THROUGH THE SMOKING RUINS...
... THE PANTHER RISES...
I DIDN'T THINK THE BLAST, RESULTING FROM THE ACTUAL RELEASE OF LIVING HUMAN ENERGY, WOULD BE SO INTENSE.
BUT THE PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTED THAT ENERGY ARE STILL ALIVE--IF MY HUNCH IS RIGHT!
IT HAD BETTER BE. BUT FIRST-- KHANATA.
YES--HE'S ALL RIGHT. THANK THE ANCESTORS.
KIBER HAS DONE HIS WORST. NOW, THE BATTLE MUST END...
...ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.
AND, IN KIBER'S LABORATORY...
HURRRY, FOOLSS-- I HUNGERR.
I MUST HAVE ENERRGY ƷRUKƸ TO BATTLE THE PANTHER!
WHY THE ƷURKƸ DELAY?
THERE IS A FEED-BACK IMPEDENCE IN THE CONVERTER MECHANISM.
THE OTHER TERMINAL MUST HAVE BEEN DAMAGED.
ABRUPTLY--
KIBER--
--I'M COMING-- COMING TO END YOUR MURDEROUS REIGN!
THAT WASS T'CHALLA'SS VOICE ƷRAKƸ WHY HASN'T HE BEEN ƷURKƸ CAPPTURRED?
FIND HIM!
BRING HIM TO ME IN ƷURKƸ CHAINS!

"ALLERRT THE WHOLE ƎGAKS COMPLEX--CAPTURING THE PANTHER ISS THE PRRIME OBJECTIVE!"
MORE OF KIBER'S MEN!
I SUSPECT THAT KIBER MANUFACTURES THEM SOMEHOW--THEY'RE NOT QUITE LIVING CREATURES.
YET NOT QUITE UNLIVING, EITHER..
HE'S HERE!
UURK!
MMMFF!
WHUMP
FIGHTING THESE CREATURES IS ALMOST EASY.
THEIR ONLY ADVANTAGE IS THEIR NUMBERS.
BEHIND ME--I SENSE MORE OF THEM COMING THROUGH THE WALL.
I WONDER IF THE NIGHTMARES THEMSELVES WERE SOMEHOW CAUSED BY KIBER.


THEY'LL SOON FIND THAT DESPITE THEIR UNUSUAL POWER...
...THE PANTHER IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR THEM.
SNAK!
WAK
I CANNOT PASS THRU THE VERY WALLS--
--BUT NONE IS MY SUPERIOR IN STEALTH!
KRK
ONCE AGAIN, I STAND AT KIBER'S THRESHOLD.
THIS TIME THERE ARE NONE TO SUCCOR HIM.

AND, INSIDE THE LAB...
WHAT ISS THISS ≥URK≤ SSILENCE?
GUARRDSS ≥URK≤ I NEED MY ENERGY!
KIBERR HUNGERRSS!
KIBER WEAKENSS.
KIBER SSTARVESS.
ISS ANYONE THERRE?
GUARRDSS!
THP THP
THERE ARE NO MORE GUARDS, KIBER.
PANTHER!
MY ENERGY GLOBE-- YOU MUSST LET ME HAVE ≥AG≤ THE LIFE-FORCE OR I'LL DIE!
YOU WON'T LET ME ≥URK≤ DIE?
WHAT ABOUT THOSE WITHIN THIS VESSEL?
THEY'RE NOT DEAD-- YOU ≥RAK≤ KNOW THAT. THEIR LIFE, THEIR MINDS ARE INTACT WITHIN THAT GLOBE!
IT ISS MUCH BETTER MY WAY-- WHEN I ABSSORB THEMM ≥RUK≤ THEY BECOME PARRT OF MMY MIND-- IMMORRTAL-- IF YOU LET ME LIVE.

AND WHEN YOU HUNGER AGAIN--WHEN YOU ABSORB *EVERYONE*? WHAT WILL YOU DO--START *BREEDING* PEOPLE TO FEED ON?
IS THAT YOUR PLAN FOR *HUMAN EXISTENCE*?
YOU DON'T ⋛AR⋚ ***UNDERR-SSTAND.*** IT'SS LIKE ***PARADISSE--ETERNAL--*** WITH NONE ⋛URG⋚ OF THE ***PRROBLEMSS*** OF INDIVIDUAL EXISSTENCCE.
NO ***LONELINESS*** ⋛RUK⋚ NO ***WARSS*** -- NO ***CONFLICT.*** IT ISS A GRREAT ***CONTRIBUTION.***
YOU'RE RIGHT, KIBER--I ***DON'T*** UNDERSTAND.
THESE ARE ***INDIVIDUALS*** IN THIS GLOBE--WITH THEIR ***OWN*** LIVES TO LIVE.
PERHAPS IN ***WAKANDA*** WE'LL FIND A WAY TO GIVE THOSE LIVES BACK TO THEM.
BUT-- I'LL ⋛RUK⋚ ***PERISSH!***
INDEED.
End.
NEXT ISSUE
The PANTHER in NEW YORK

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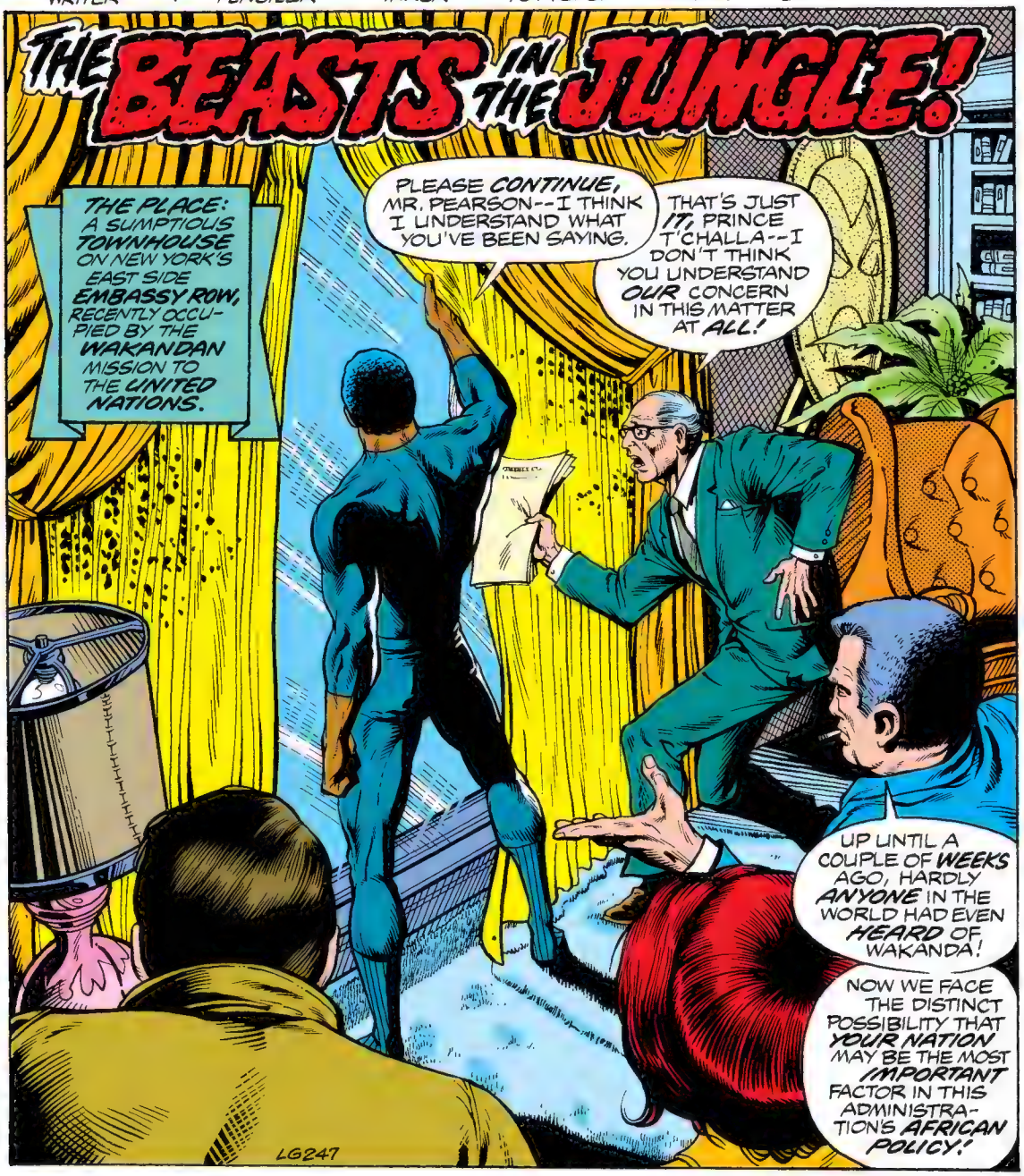
BLACK PANTHER
ALL NEW!
SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE MIGHTY AVENGERS T'CHALLA MUST FACE THE POWER OF... KLAW!

With the sleekness of a jungle beast, the Prince of Wakanda stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt, for when danger lurks he dons the garb of the savage cat from which he gains his name!

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!™

ED HANNIGAN WRITER / JERRY BINGHAM PENCILER / GENE DAY INKER / RICK PARKER letterer / NELSON YOMTOV COLORIST / ROGER STERN EDITOR / JIM SHOOTER ED.-IN-CHIEF

THE BEASTS IN THE JUNGLE!


THE PLACE: A SUMPTUOUS TOWNHOUSE ON NEW YORK'S EAST SIDE EMBASSY ROW, RECENTLY OCCUPIED BY THE WAKANDAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS.
PLEASE CONTINUE, MR. PEARSON--I THINK I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'VE BEEN SAYING.
THAT'S JUST IT, PRINCE T'CHALLA--I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND OUR CONCERN IN THIS MATTER AT ALL!
UP UNTIL A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, HARDLY ANYONE IN THE WORLD HAD EVEN HEARD OF WAKANDA!
NOW WE FACE THE DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT YOUR NATION MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THIS ADMINISTRATION'S AFRICAN POLICY!
LG247

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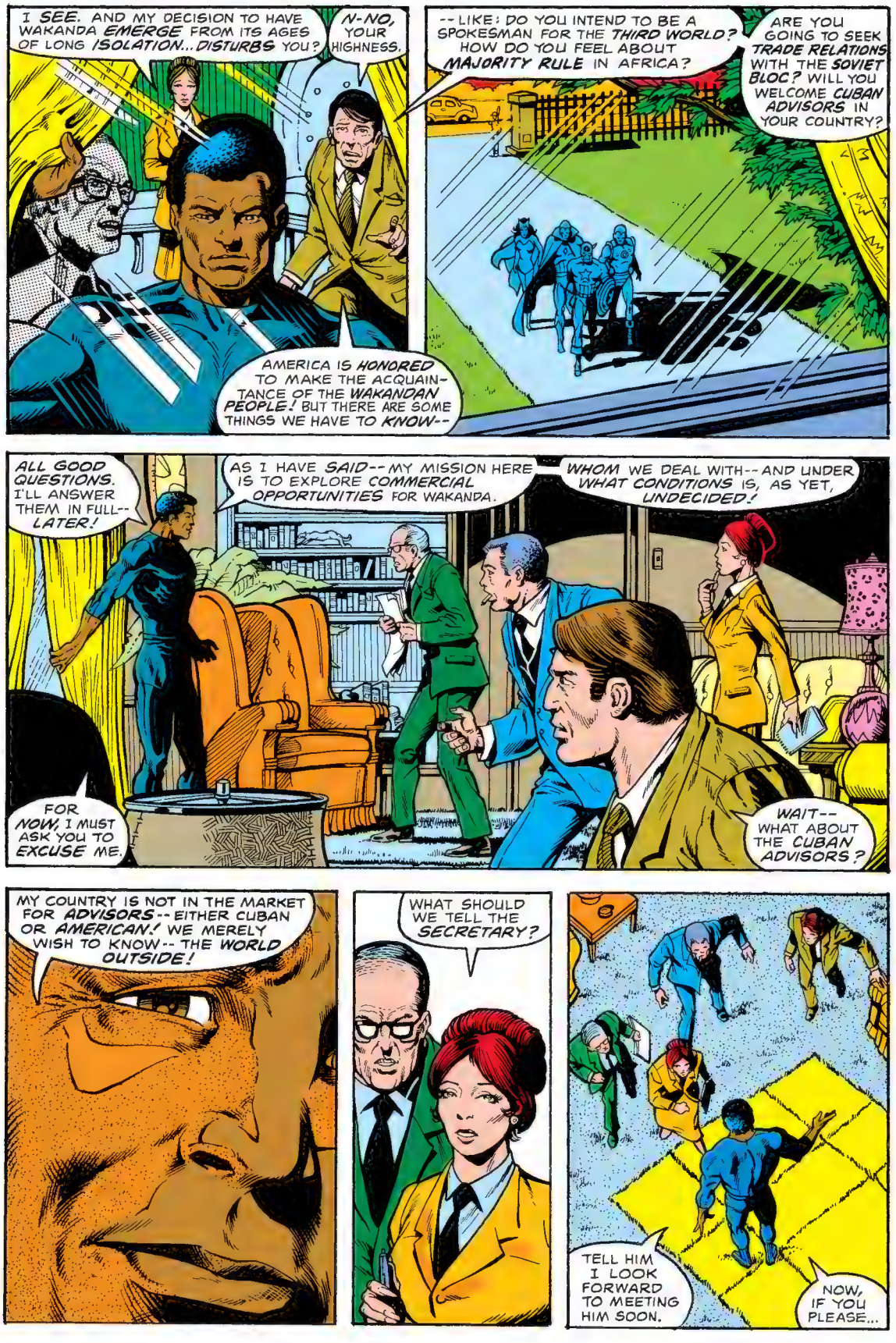
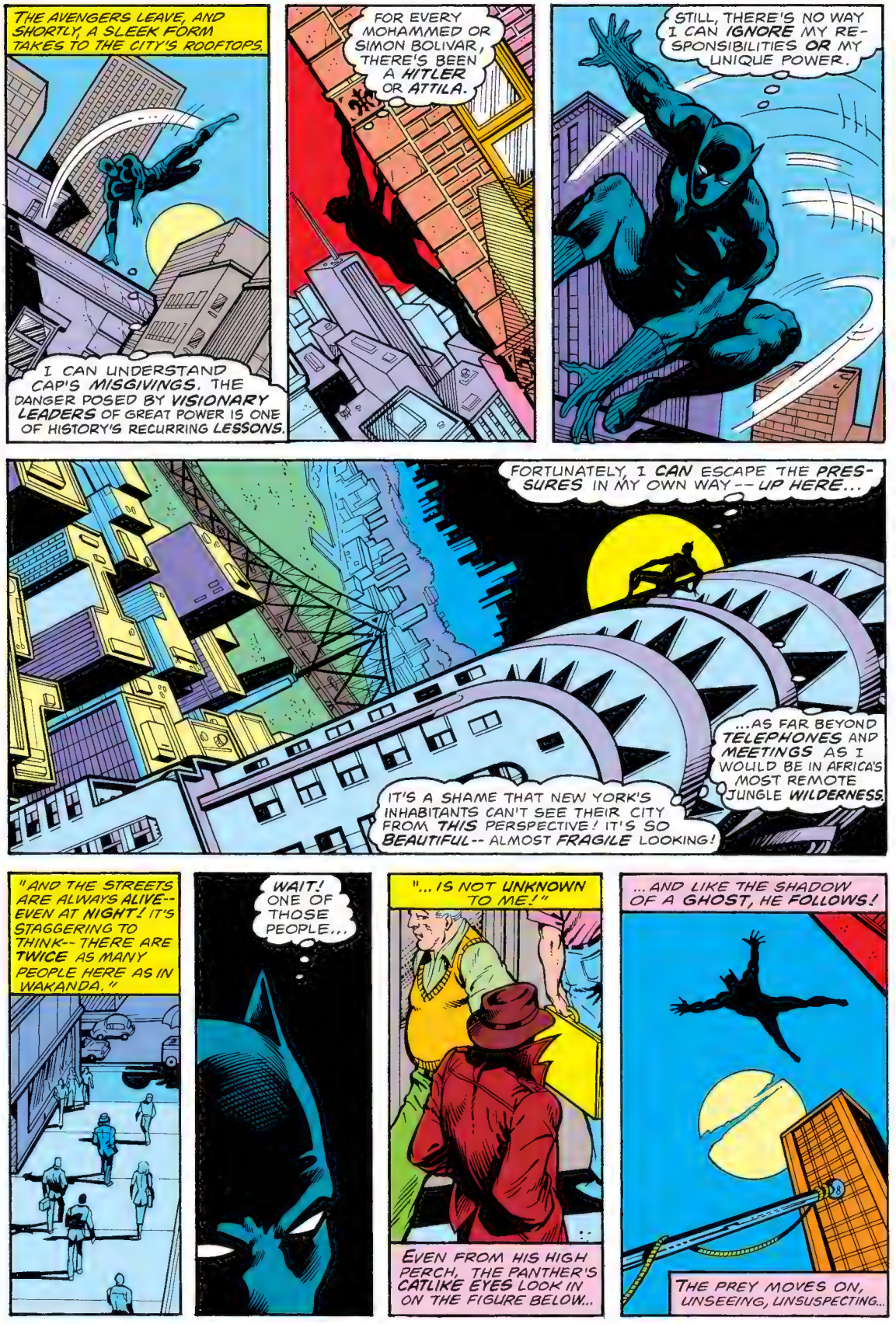
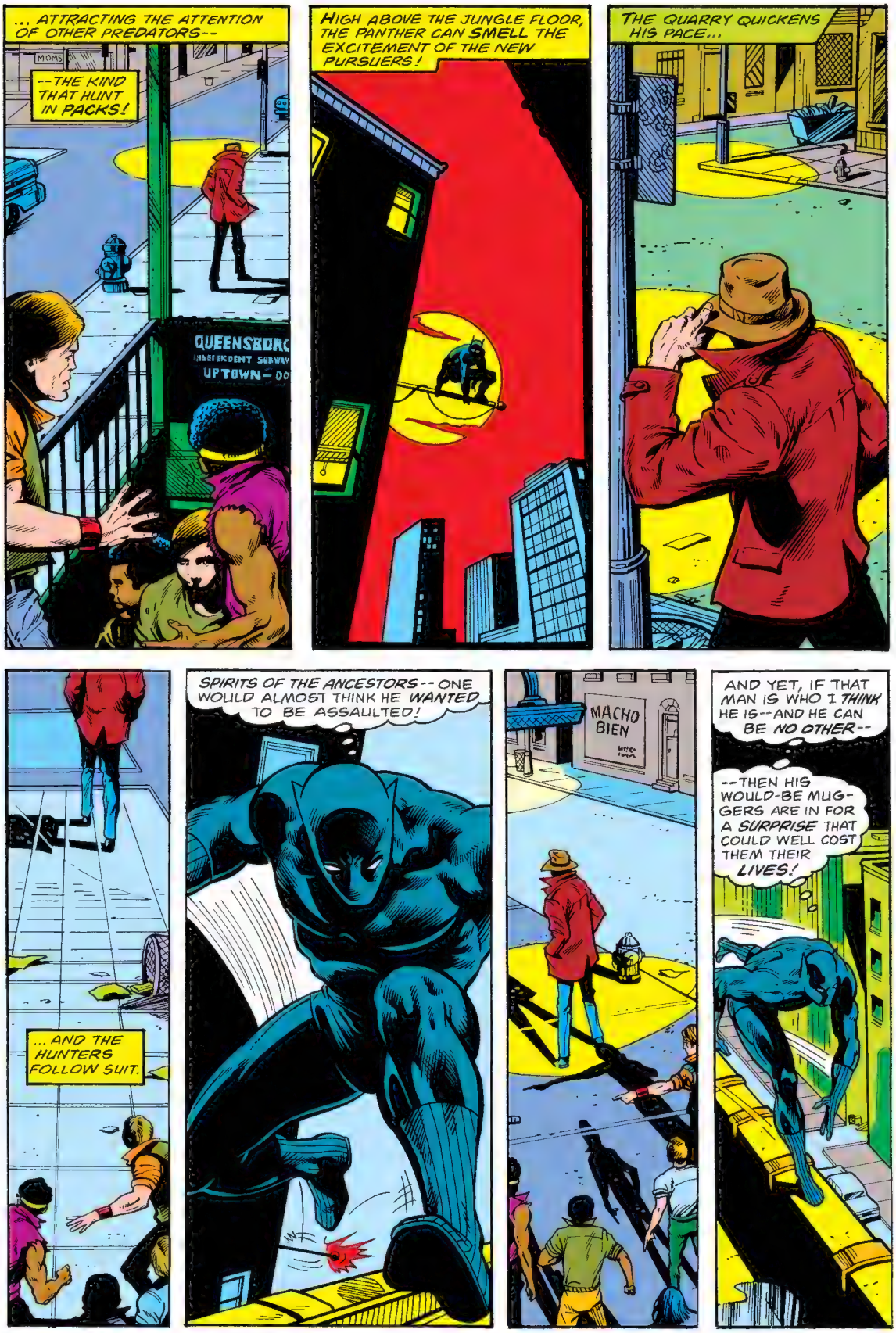

I SEE. AND MY DECISION TO HAVE WAKANDA EMERGE FROM ITS AGES OF LONG ISOLATION... DISTURBS YOU?
N-NO, YOUR HIGHNESS.
AMERICA IS HONORED TO MAKE THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE WAKANDAN PEOPLE! BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS WE HAVE TO KNOW--
--LIKE: DO YOU INTEND TO BE A SPOKESMAN FOR THE THIRD WORLD? HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MAJORITY RULE IN AFRICA?
ARE YOU GOING TO SEEK TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET BLOC? WILL YOU WELCOME CUBAN ADVISORS IN YOUR COUNTRY?
ALL GOOD QUESTIONS. I'LL ANSWER THEM IN FULL-- LATER!
AS I HAVE SAID-- MY MISSION HERE IS TO EXPLORE COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WAKANDA.
WHOM WE DEAL WITH-- AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS IS, AS YET, UNDECIDED!
FOR NOW, I MUST ASK YOU TO EXCUSE ME.
WAIT-- WHAT ABOUT THE CUBAN ADVISORS?
MY COUNTRY IS NOT IN THE MARKET FOR ADVISORS-- EITHER CUBAN OR AMERICAN! WE MERELY WISH TO KNOW-- THE WORLD OUTSIDE!
WHAT SHOULD WE TELL THE SECRETARY?
TELL HIM I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING HIM SOON.
NOW, IF YOU PLEASE...

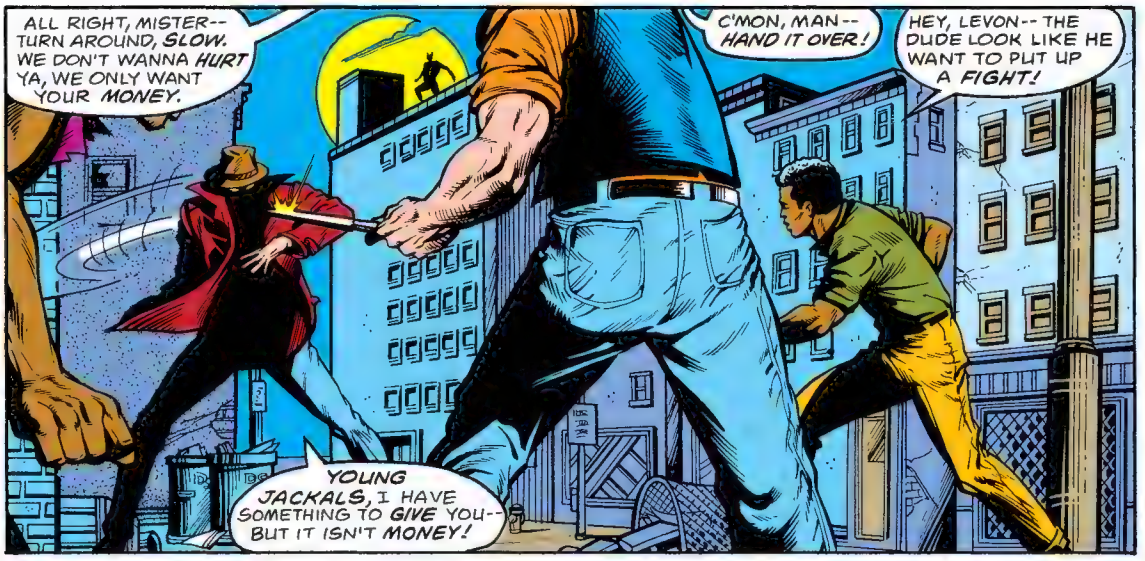
THIS WAY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.
BOY, THAT T'CHALLA IS A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK! IF HIS TINY NATION WEREN'T SO IMPORTANT--!
WHOA! LOOK WHO'S VISITING HIM NOW--THE AVENGERS!
THESE ARE SOME DIGS THE PANTHER HAS... THEY ALMOST MAKE AVENGERS' MANSION LOOK LIKE A DIVE!
BUT I'M NOT SURPRISED. T'CHALLA IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST MONARCHS!
WELL, T'CHALLA... ONLY IN BUSINESS A WEEK, AND I SEE YOU'VE ALREADY GOTTEN SOME PRETTY HIGH-POWERED VISITORS.
RIGHT. OLD AUBREY PEARSON'S ONE OF CYRUS VANCE'S TOUGHEST NEGOTIATORS.
OH, HE WENT PRETTY EASY ON ME, CAP.
THOUGH THE WORD WAS NEVER MENTIONED, IT WAS PRETTY CLEAR WHAT THEY ARE AFTER...
...EXCLUSIVE TRADE RIGHTS TO WAKANDA'S VIBRANIUM!
SURELY YOU HAVE OTHER THINGS TO OFFER--YOUR COUNTRY'S ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY...
ROOTS
HISTORY OF DANIEL DAY
AND THREATEN THE WEST'S NEAR-MONOPOLY ON SUCH ITEMS? NO, I'M AFRAID THEY'RE INTERESTED IN VIBRANIUM ALONE.
FORGIVE ME IF I INTRUDE, PANTHER--BUT I'M STILL CURIOUS AS TO YOUR REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING THIS CONSULATE.
SURELY, BREAKING WITH A TIMELESS TRADITION IS NO MERE PRINCELY WHIM.

IN FACT... I SEEM TO DETECT A QUALITATIVE DIFFERENCE IN YOUR MANNER!
YOUR PERCEPTION IS UNCANNY, VISION. HOWEVER--
--HOWEVER, I'VE PROBED TOO DEEPLY INTO A PRIVATE MATTER. I APOLOGIZE.
QUITE ALL RIGHT.
TO TELL THE TRUTH-- I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHY I'M DOING THIS. IT'S JUST A FEELING I HAVE--THAT IT'S TIME FOR WAKANDA TO JOIN THE REST OF HUMANITY.
"THE CONVICTION CAME TO ME IN A STRANGE PLACE--A STONEY CITADEL RISING FROM THE WAVES OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC*.
*LAST ISSUE-- ROG.
"IT WAS THERE I DID BATTLE WITH SEMI-LIVING CREATURES WHO HAD KIDNAPPED MY COUSIN VIA TELEPORTATION.
"DESPITE THEIR EERIE POWERS, I DEFEATED THEM AND THEIR FOUL CREATOR--
"--KIBER THE CRUEL!
"IT WAS THEN THAT I REALIZED THAT REMAINING HIDDEN WAS NO GUARANTEE OF MY COUNTRY'S SAFETY FROM THE OUTSIDE."
THE CONVERSATION TURNS THEN TO LIGHTER TOPICS, BUT ALL TOO SOON...
I'M AFRAID IT'S GETTING LATE, T'CHALLA!
TOO TRUE! WE'VE A LOT OF AVENGERS' BUSINESS TO CLEAR UP TONIGHT.
I UNDERSTAND. I'VE BUSINESS OF MY OWN.
COULD I SEE YOU ALONE FOR A FEW MINUTES, CAP?

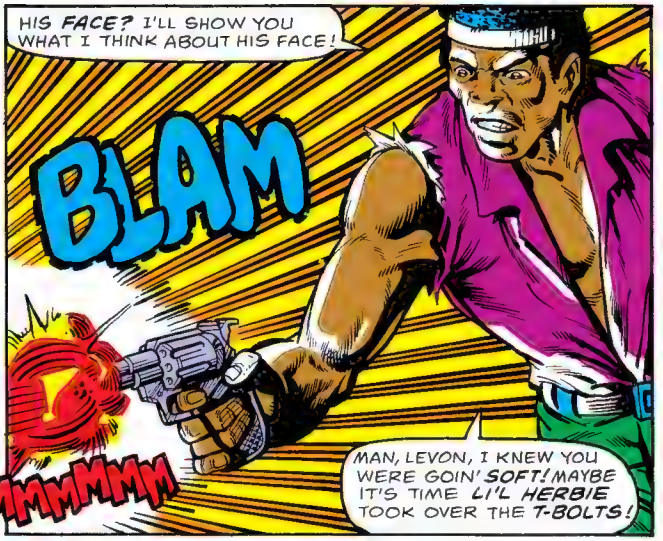
WHAT'S UP, PANTHER? I COULD SENSE YOUR UNEASINESS ALL EVENING.
THE VISION ALMOST PUT HIS FINGER ON IT. I HAVE UNDERGONE A CHANGE...
A CHANGE THAT WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY WAKANDA'S RECENT VIBRANIUM CRISIS.*
*B.P.#7-10 --ROG.
"THOUGH THE DETAILS MUST REMAIN SECRET, SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT A NEAR CATASTROPHE IN THE SACRED VIBRANIUM MOUND WROUGHT BIOLOGICAL HAVOC WITH AT LEAST TWO INDIVIDUALS.
"IN MY ABSENCE, A MEMBER OF THE RULING PANTHER CLAN DEFIED THE ANCIENT TABOOS -- AND EXPOSED HIMSELF TO THE METAL IN ITS RAW FORM.
"ITS UNEARTHLY EMANATIONS TRANSFORMED THE UNWARY FOOL INTO A RAMPAGING MONSTER.
"IN THE MIDST OF OUR FINAL BATTLE, I WAS ALSO EXPOSED TO THE RAW ORE. * "
*ISSUE #10 --ROG.
AS A RESULT, MY NATURAL INSTINCTS WERE... HEIGHTENED. IT'S NOT LIKE TELEPATHY OR CLAIRVOYANCE -- I JUST... FEEL THINGS, SENSE CRISIS POINTS.
ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME YOU HAVE THESE FEELINGS -- ABOUT WAKANDA?
YES! WAKANDA, AFRICA -- AND THE WORLD. THINGS ARE GOING TO HAPPEN, AND THE NEXUS OF THE CRISIS IS HERE -- IN AMERICA!
IT'S A NEW TIME, CAP -- THE OLD RULES NO LONGER APPLY!
THOSE COULD BE DANGEROUS WORDS, T'CHALLA -- COMING FROM A MAN LESS TRUSTWORTHY THAN YOURSELF. WE BOTH KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE NATIONAL SYMBOLS...
...BUT YOU'RE ALSO THE SPIRITUAL LEADER OF YOUR PEOPLE! LET'S JUST HOPE THE VIBRANIUM DIDN'T CREATE TWO MONSTERS!

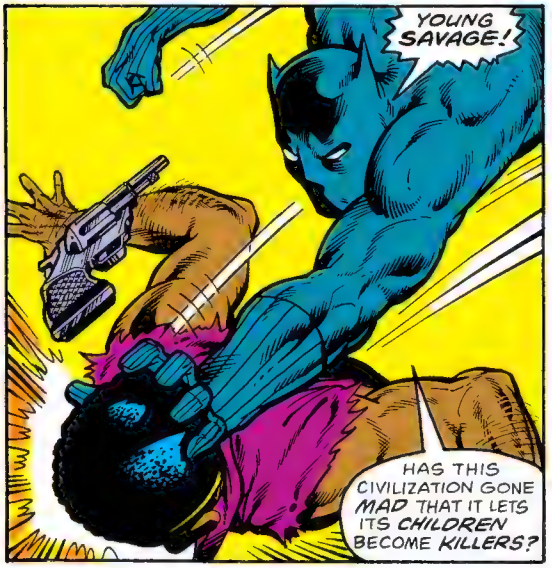

THE AVENGERS LEAVE, AND SHORTLY, A SLEEK FORM TAKES TO THE CITY'S ROOFTOPS.
I CAN UNDERSTAND CAP'S MISGIVINGS. THE DANGER POSED BY VISIONARY LEADERS OF GREAT POWER IS ONE OF HISTORY'S RECURRING LESSONS.
FOR EVERY MOHAMMED OR SIMON BOLIVAR, THERE'S BEEN A HITLER OR ATTILA.
STILL, THERE'S NO WAY I CAN IGNORE MY RESPONSIBILITIES OR MY UNIQUE POWER.
FORTUNATELY, I CAN ESCAPE THE PRESSURES IN MY OWN WAY -- UP HERE...
...AS FAR BEYOND TELEPHONES AND MEETINGS AS I WOULD BE IN AFRICA'S MOST REMOTE JUNGLE WILDERNESS.
IT'S A SHAME THAT NEW YORK'S INHABITANTS CAN'T SEE THEIR CITY FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE! IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL -- ALMOST FRAGILE LOOKING!
"AND THE STREETS ARE ALWAYS ALIVE -- EVEN AT NIGHT! IT'S STAGGERING TO THINK -- THERE ARE TWICE AS MANY PEOPLE HERE AS IN WAKANDA."
WAIT! ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE...
"... IS NOT UNKNOWN TO ME!"
EVEN FROM HIS HIGH PERCH, THE PANTHER'S CATLIKE EYES LOOK IN ON THE FIGURE BELOW...
... AND LIKE THE SHADOW OF A GHOST, HE FOLLOWS!
THE PREY MOVES ON, UNSEEING, UNSUSPECTING...


... ATTRACTING THE ATTENTION OF OTHER PREDATORS--
--THE KIND THAT HUNT IN PACKS!
MOMS
QUEENSBORO
INDEPENDENT SUBWAY
UPTOWN - DO
HIGH ABOVE THE JUNGLE FLOOR, THE PANTHER CAN SMELL THE EXCITEMENT OF THE NEW PURSUERS!
THE QUARRY QUICKENS HIS PACE...
... AND THE HUNTERS FOLLOW SUIT.
SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS -- ONE WOULD ALMOST THINK HE WANTED TO BE ASSAULTED!
MACHO BIEN
AND YET, IF THAT MAN IS WHO I THINK HE IS--AND HE CAN BE NO OTHER--
--THEN HIS WOULD-BE MUGGERS ARE IN FOR A SURPRISE THAT COULD WELL COST THEM THEIR LIVES!

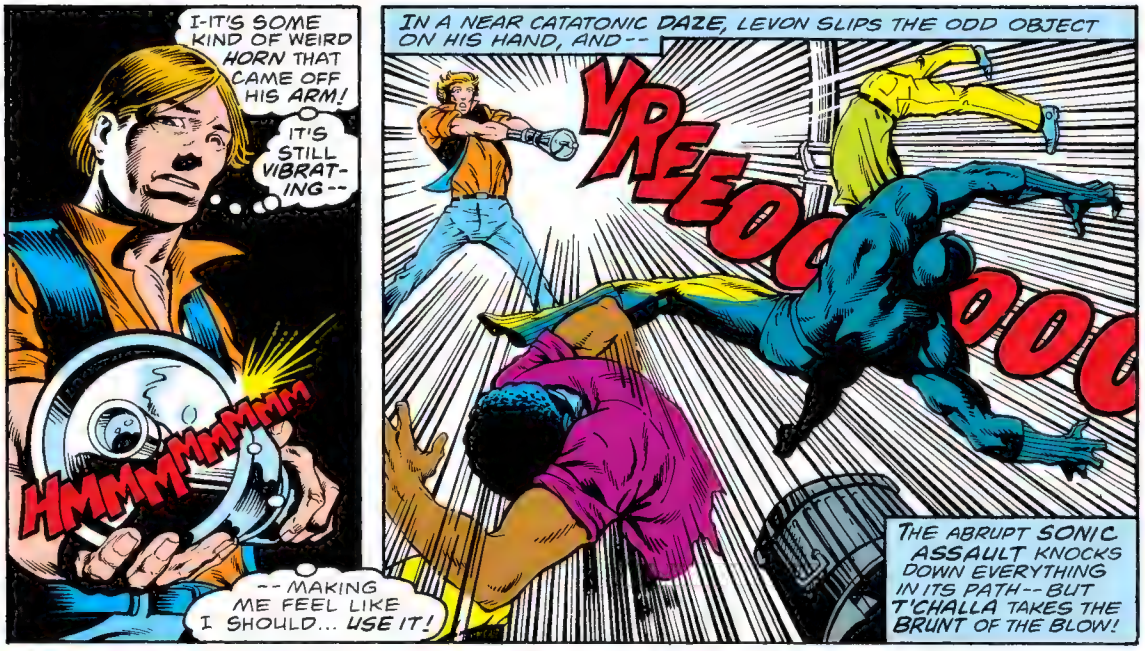

ALL RIGHT, MISTER-- TURN AROUND, SLOW. WE DON'T WANNA HURT YA, WE ONLY WANT YOUR MONEY.
C'MON, MAN-- HAND IT OVER!
HEY, LEVON-- THE DUDE LOOK LIKE HE WANT TO PUT UP A FIGHT!
YOUNG JACKALS, I HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE YOU-- BUT IT ISN'T MONEY!

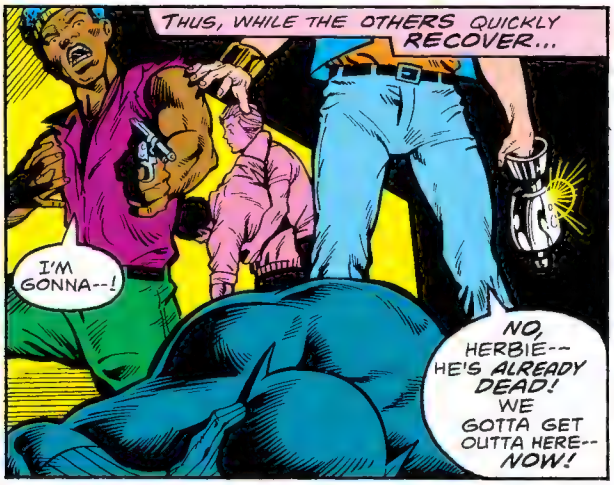
I'M GONNA HAFTA CUT YOU-- HEY! WHAT'S THAT HUM?
HOLY CRUD-- LOOKIT HIS FACE!

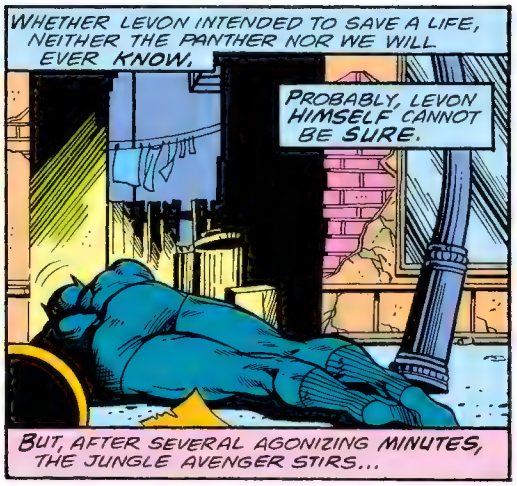

HIS FACE? I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I THINK ABOUT HIS FACE!
BLAM
HMMMMMMM
MAN, LEVON, I KNEW YOU WERE GOIN' SOFT! MAYBE IT'S TIME LI'L HERBIE TOOK OVER THE T-BOLTS!

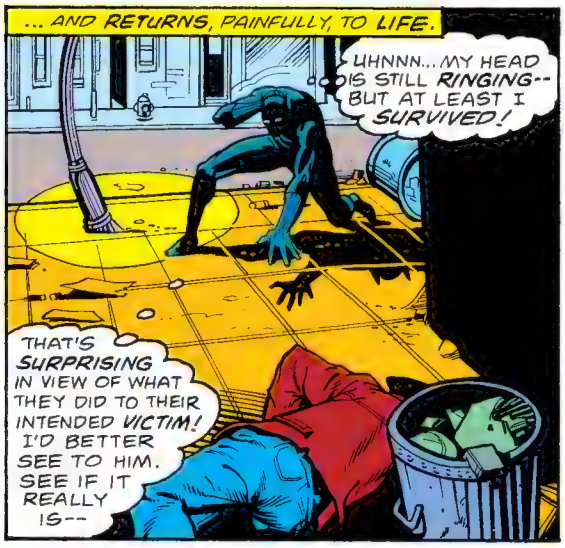

YOUNG SAVAGE!
HAS THIS CIVILIZATION GONE MAD THAT IT LETS ITS CHILDREN BECOME KILLERS?

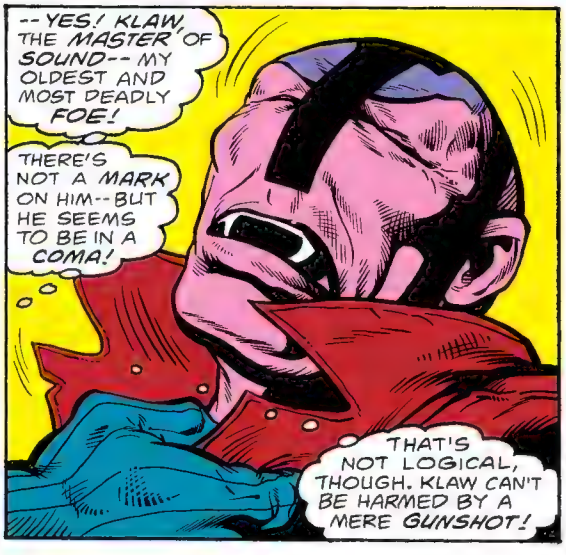
BE THANKFUL THAT YOUR OWN LAWS PROTECT YOU FROM THE FULL EXTENT OF THE PANTHER'S REGAL RAGE!
WOW-- HERBIE SHOT THE GUY!
THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR ME. WHAT SHOULD I--
HMMMMMMM
--WHAT'S THAT THING?

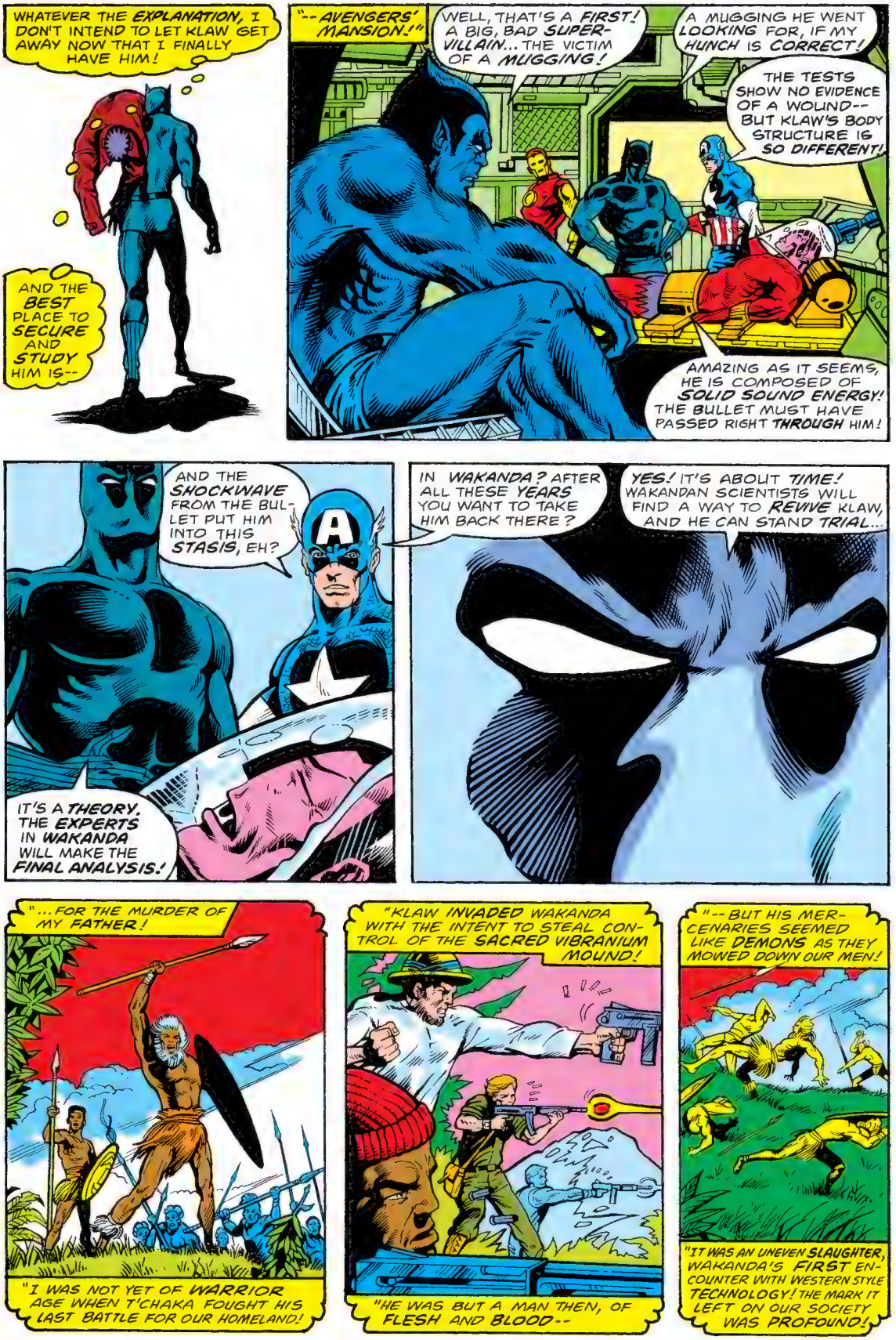

I-IT'S SOME KIND OF WEIRD HORN THAT CAME OFF HIS ARM!
IT'S STILL VIBRATING--
HMMMMMMMM
--MAKING ME FEEL LIKE I SHOULD... USE IT!
IN A NEAR CATATONIC DAZE, LEVON SLIPS THE ODD OBJECT ON HIS HAND, AND--
VREEOOOOOOO
THE ABRUPT SONIC ASSAULT KNOCKS DOWN EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH--BUT T'CHALLA TAKES THE BRUNT OF THE BLOW!


THUS, WHILE THE OTHERS QUICKLY RECOVER...
I'M GONNA--!
NO, HERBIE--HE'S ALREADY DEAD! WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE--NOW!

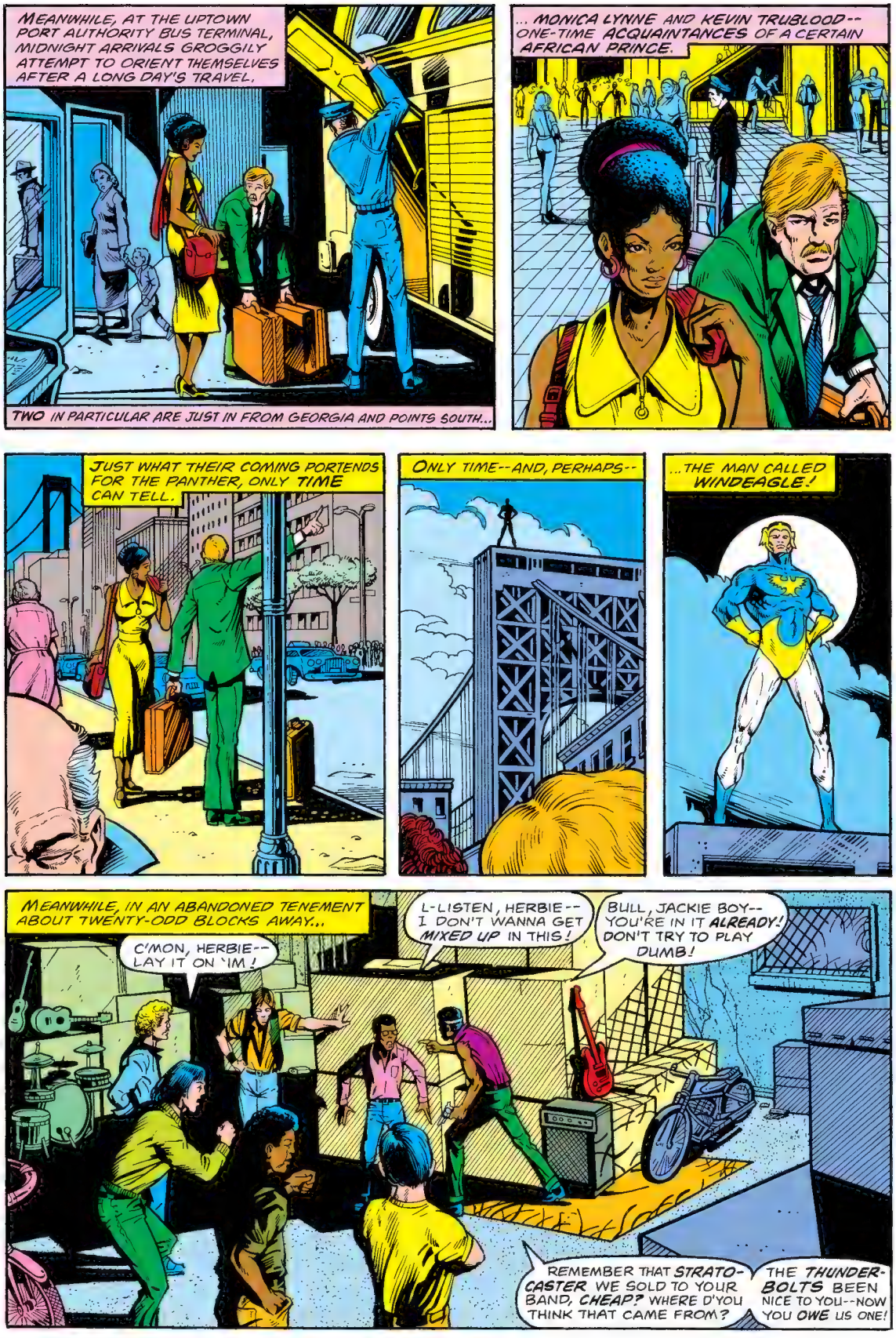

WHETHER LEVON INTENDED TO SAVE A LIFE, NEITHER THE PANTHER NOR WE WILL EVER KNOW,
PROBABLY, LEVON HIMSELF CANNOT BE SURE.
BUT, AFTER SEVERAL AGONIZING MINUTES, THE JUNGLE AVENGER STIRS...

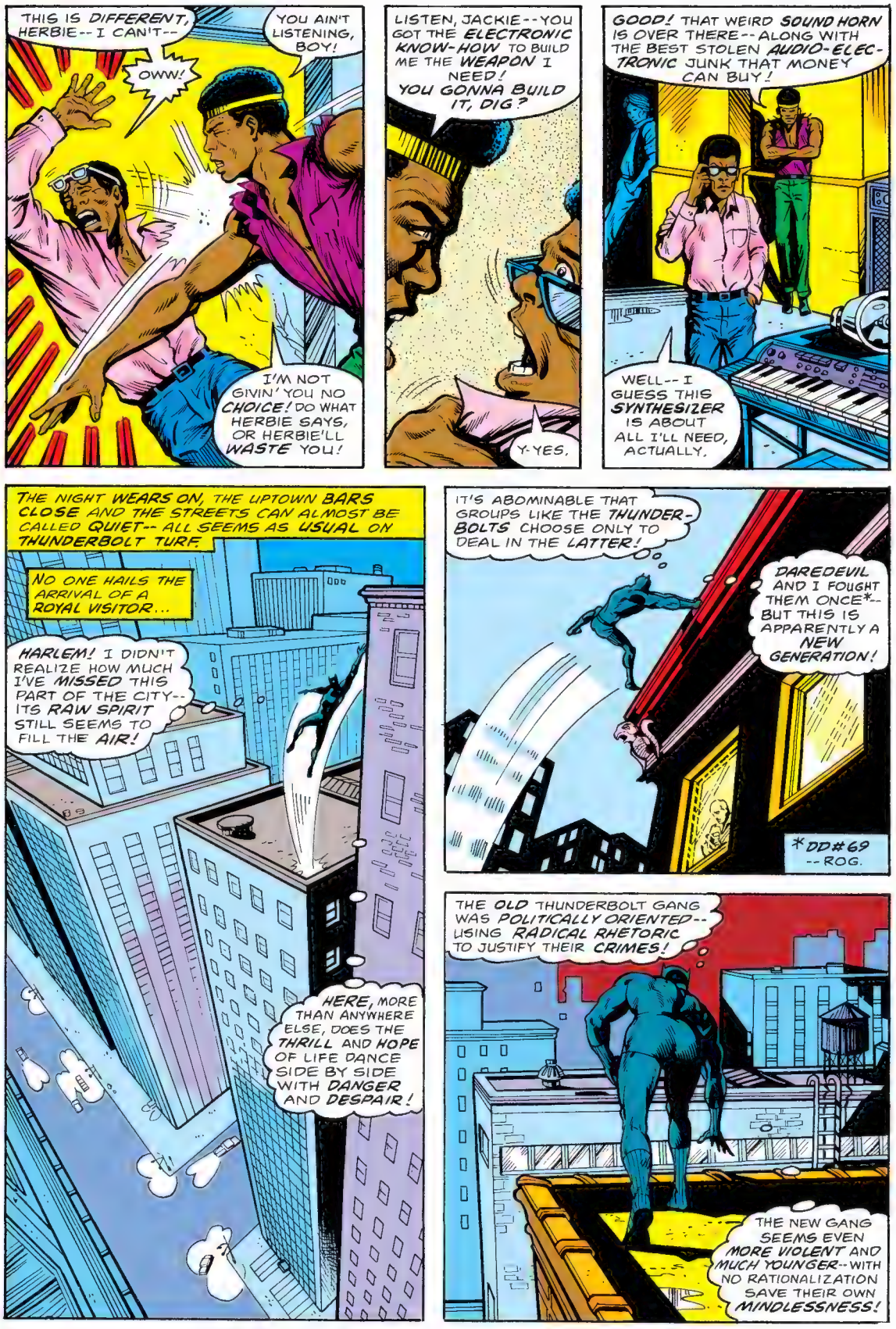

... AND RETURNS, PAINFULLY, TO LIFE.
UHNNN... MY HEAD IS STILL RINGING--BUT AT LEAST I SURVIVED!
THAT'S SURPRISING IN VIEW OF WHAT THEY DID TO THEIR INTENDED VICTIM! I'D BETTER SEE TO HIM. SEE IF IT REALLY IS--

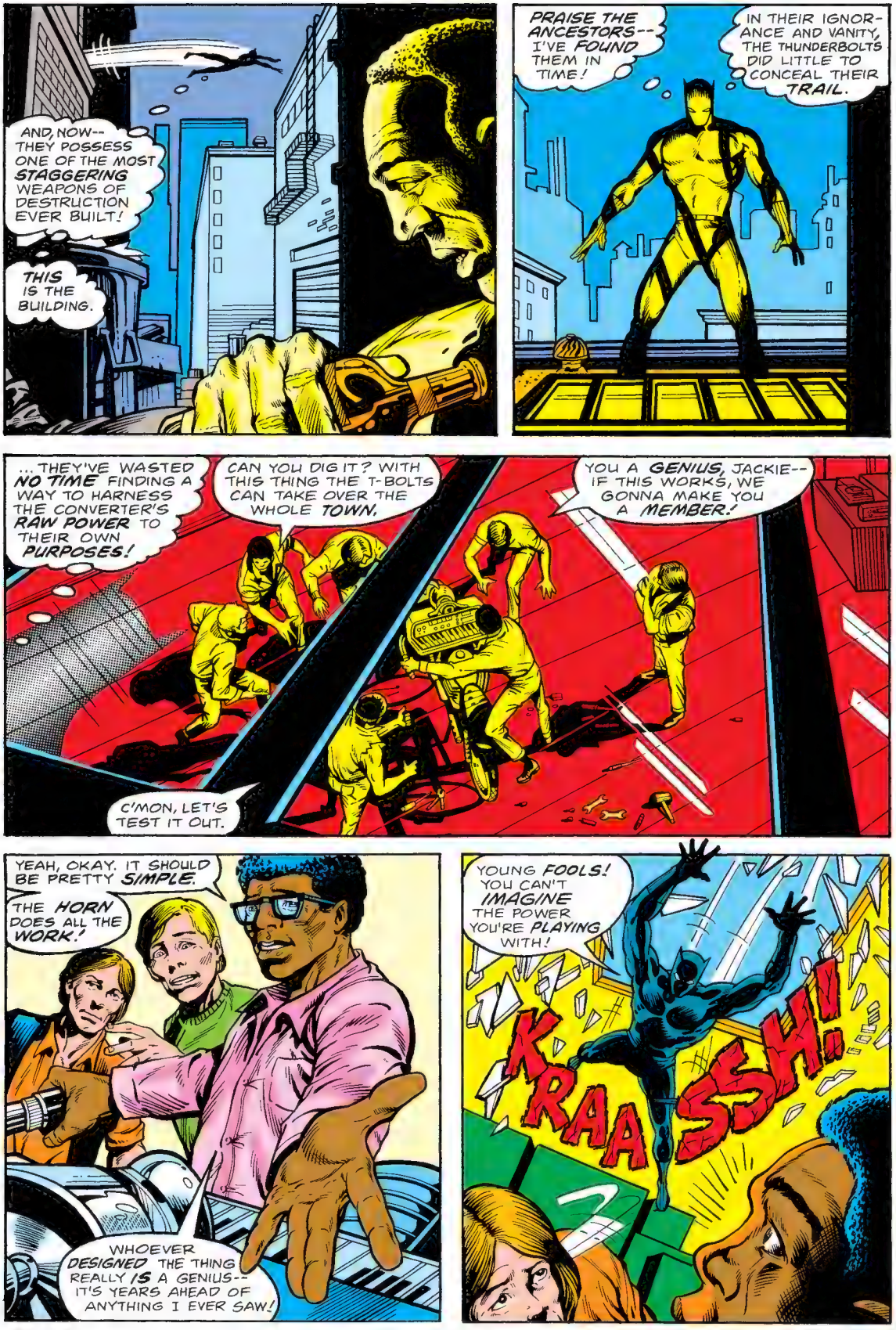

--YES! KLAW, THE MASTER OF SOUND--MY OLDEST AND MOST DEADLY FOE!
THERE'S NOT A MARK ON HIM--BUT HE SEEMS TO BE IN A COMA!
THAT'S NOT LOGICAL, THOUGH. KLAW CAN'T BE HARMED BY A MERE GUNSHOT!

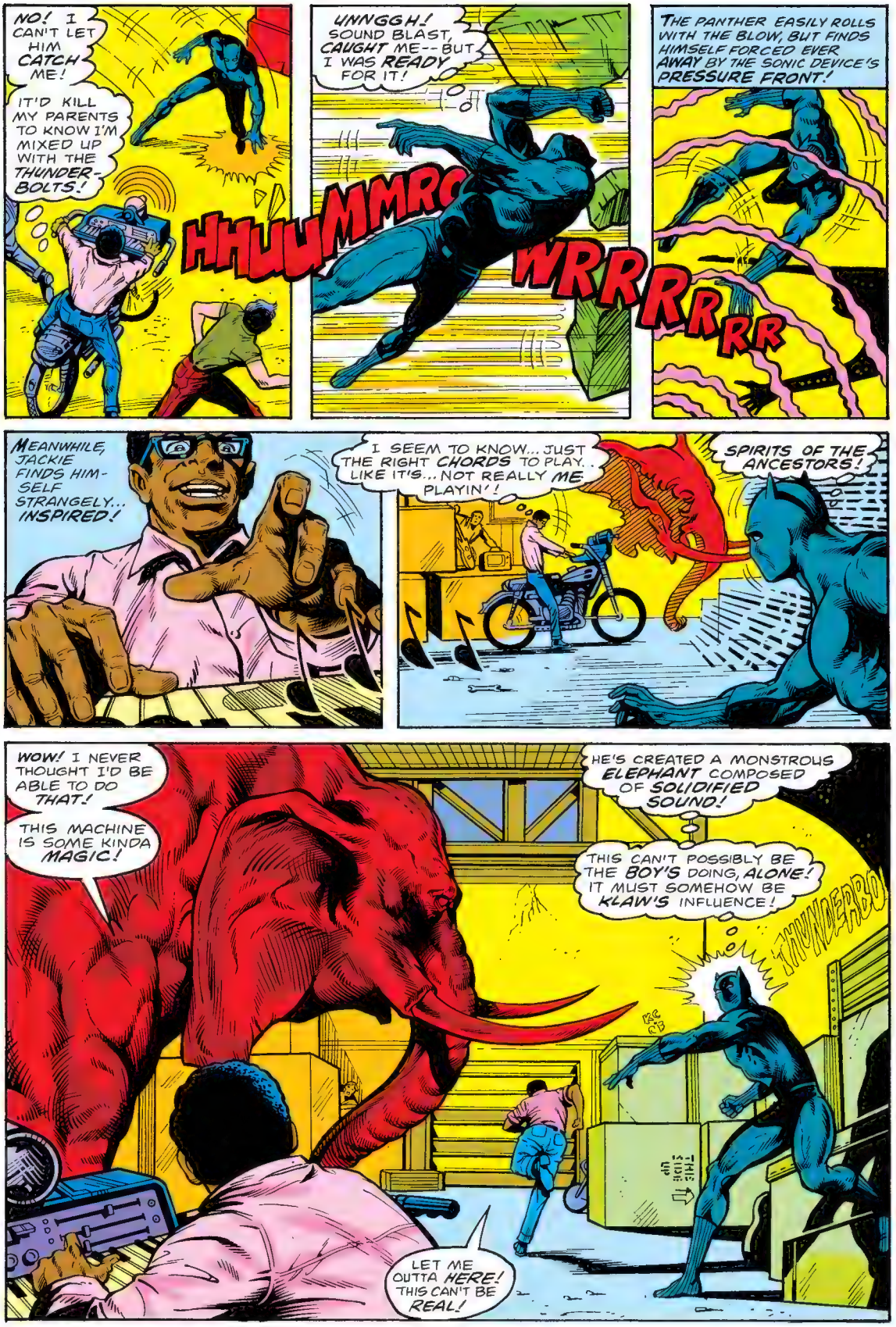

WHATEVER THE EXPLANATION, I DON'T INTEND TO LET KLAW GET AWAY NOW THAT I FINALLY HAVE HIM!
AND THE BEST PLACE TO SECURE AND STUDY HIM IS--
"--AVENGERS' MANSION!"
WELL, THAT'S A FIRST! A BIG, BAD SUPER-VILLAIN... THE VICTIM OF A MUGGING!
A MUGGING HE WENT LOOKING FOR, IF MY HUNCH IS CORRECT!
THE TESTS SHOW NO EVIDENCE OF A WOUND-- BUT KLAW'S BODY STRUCTURE IS SO DIFFERENT!
AMAZING AS IT SEEMS, HE IS COMPOSED OF SOLID SOUND ENERGY! THE BULLET MUST HAVE PASSED RIGHT THROUGH HIM!
AND THE SHOCKWAVE FROM THE BULLET PUT HIM INTO THIS STASIS, EH?
IT'S A THEORY. THE EXPERTS IN WAKANDA WILL MAKE THE FINAL ANALYSIS!
IN WAKANDA? AFTER ALL THESE YEARS YOU WANT TO TAKE HIM BACK THERE?
YES! IT'S ABOUT TIME! WAKANDAN SCIENTISTS WILL FIND A WAY TO REVIVE KLAW, AND HE CAN STAND TRIAL...
"...FOR THE MURDER OF MY FATHER!
"I WAS NOT YET OF WARRIOR AGE WHEN T'CHAKA FOUGHT HIS LAST BATTLE FOR OUR HOMELAND!
"KLAW INVADED WAKANDA WITH THE INTENT TO STEAL CONTROL OF THE SACRED VIBRANIUM MOUND!
"HE WAS BUT A MAN THEN, OF FLESH AND BLOOD--
"--BUT HIS MERCENARIES SEEMED LIKE DEMONS AS THEY MOWED DOWN OUR MEN!
"IT WAS AN UNEVEN SLAUGHTER, WAKANDA'S FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH WESTERN STYLE TECHNOLOGY! THE MARK IT LEFT ON OUR SOCIETY WAS PROFOUND!

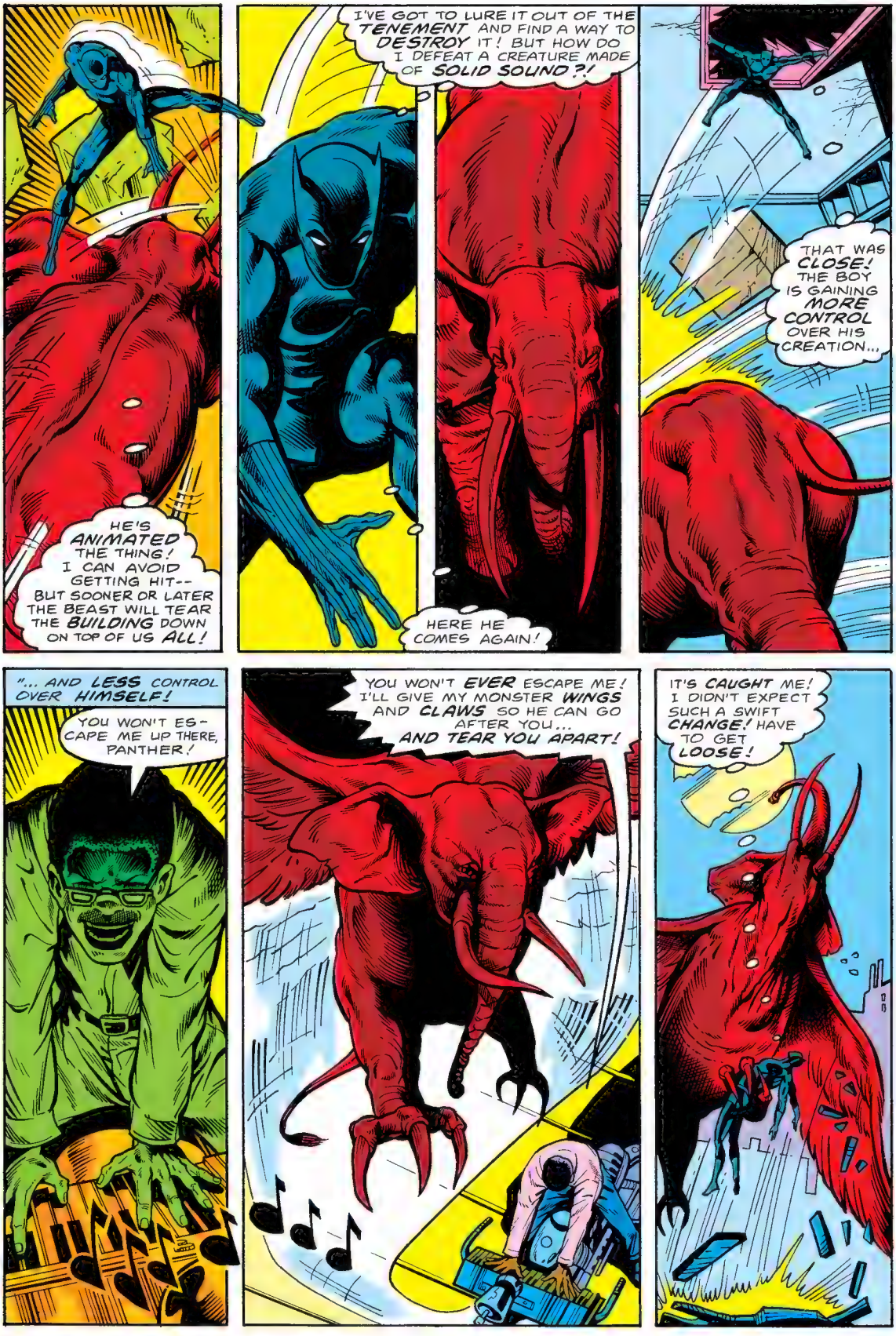
"MORE PROFOUND WAS THE MARK LEFT ON THE LIFE OF A YOUNG PRINCELING--WHO WATCHED IN DISBELIEF AS HIS FATHER WAS BRUTALLY MURDERED!
"THE INVADERS GAVE NO QUARTER... NOR DID I!
"IN MY FIRST ACT AS A WARRIOR, I SEIZED KLAW'S SOUND CONVERTER, VOWING VENGEANCE BY THE GLOW OF MY BURNING VILLAGE!
"THAT VENGEANCE WAS NEVER FULLY CONSUMMATED--FOR, THOUGH I DROVE THE MERCENARIES FROM OUR LAND, AND SHATTERED KLAW'S HAND IN THE PROCESS--
"--HE LIVED TO CONTINUE HIS CAREER OF VILLAINY! HE RETURNED, YEARS LATER--STRONGER THAN EVER--TO MAKE A SECOND ATTEMPT AT STEALING THE VIBRANIUM."
WITH THE HELP OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR, I DEFEATED HIM AGAIN! AT FIRST, WE THOUGHT HE HAD PERISHED! *
BUT HE SURVIVED BY TRANSFORMING HIMSELF INTO SOUND--AND HE'S BEDEVILED ME EVER SINCE... UNTIL NOW.
* THESE EVENTS WERE DEPICTED IN FF #53--ROG.
AND NOW, I HAVE ONE MORE TASK TO ATTEND TO--RETRIEVING KLAW'S SOUND HORN!
WAIT, PANTHER--THIS SOUNDS LIKE AN AVENGERS-SIZED JOB--
HE'S NOT LISTENING, IRON MAN.
HE WANTS TO DO IT ALONE--AND WHO ARE WE TO STOP HIM?

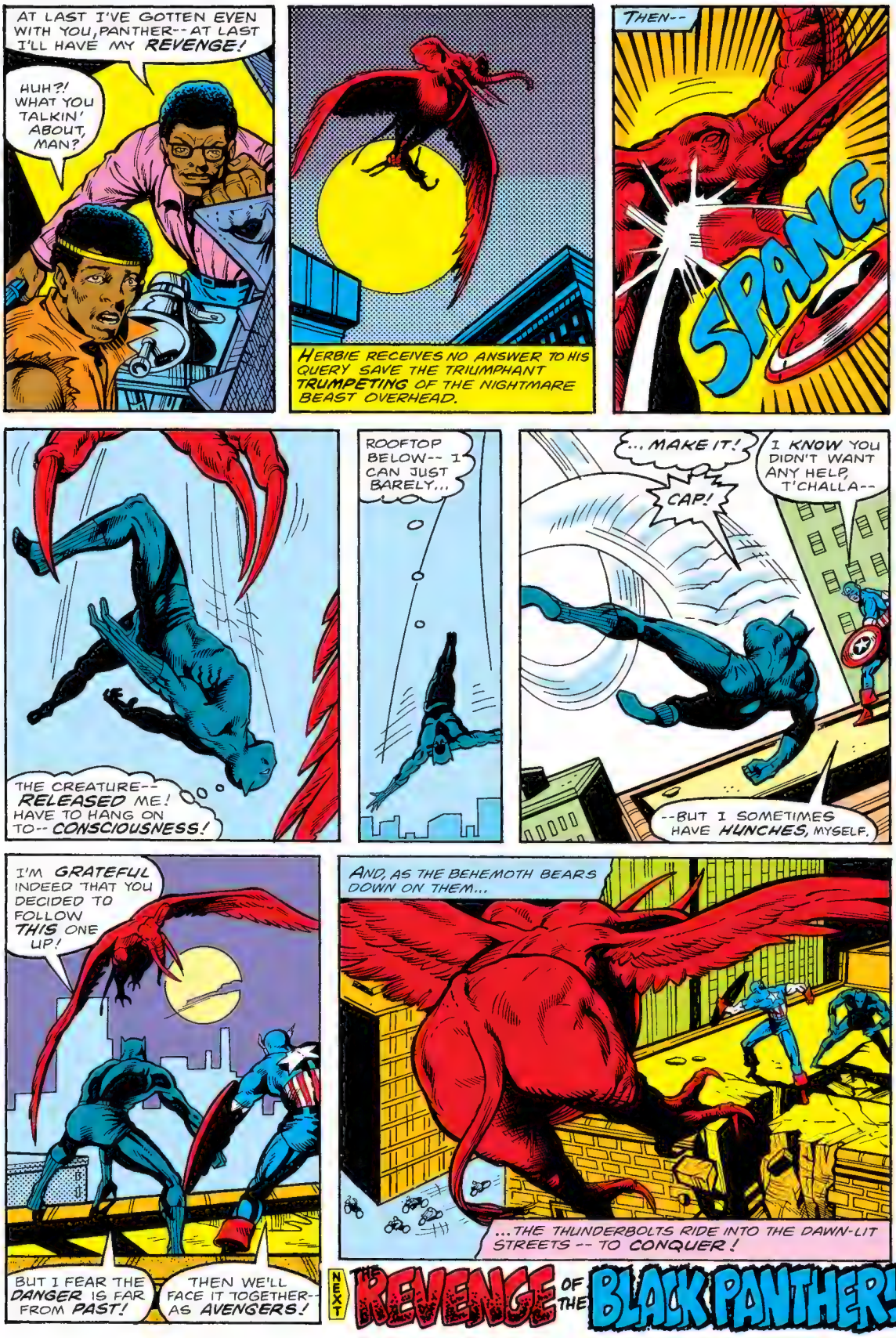

MEANWHILE, AT THE UPTOWN PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL, MIDNIGHT ARRIVALS GROGGILY ATTEMPT TO ORIENT THEMSELVES AFTER A LONG DAY'S TRAVEL.
TWO IN PARTICULAR ARE JUST IN FROM GEORGIA AND POINTS SOUTH...
... MONICA LYNNE AND KEVIN TRUBLOOD--ONE-TIME ACQUAINTANCES OF A CERTAIN AFRICAN PRINCE.
JUST WHAT THEIR COMING PORTENDS FOR THE PANTHER, ONLY TIME CAN TELL.
ONLY TIME--AND, PERHAPS--
...THE MAN CALLED WINDEAGLE!
MEANWHILE, IN AN ABANDONED TENEMENT ABOUT TWENTY-ODD BLOCKS AWAY...
C'MON, HERBIE--LAY IT ON 'IM!
L-LISTEN, HERBIE--I DON'T WANNA GET MIXED UP IN THIS!
BULL, JACKIE BOY--YOU'RE IN IT ALREADY! DON'T TRY TO PLAY DUMB!
REMEMBER THAT STRATO-CASTER WE SOLD TO YOUR BAND, CHEAP? WHERE D'YOU THINK THAT CAME FROM?
THE THUNDER-BOLTS BEEN NICE TO YOU--NOW YOU OWE US ONE!

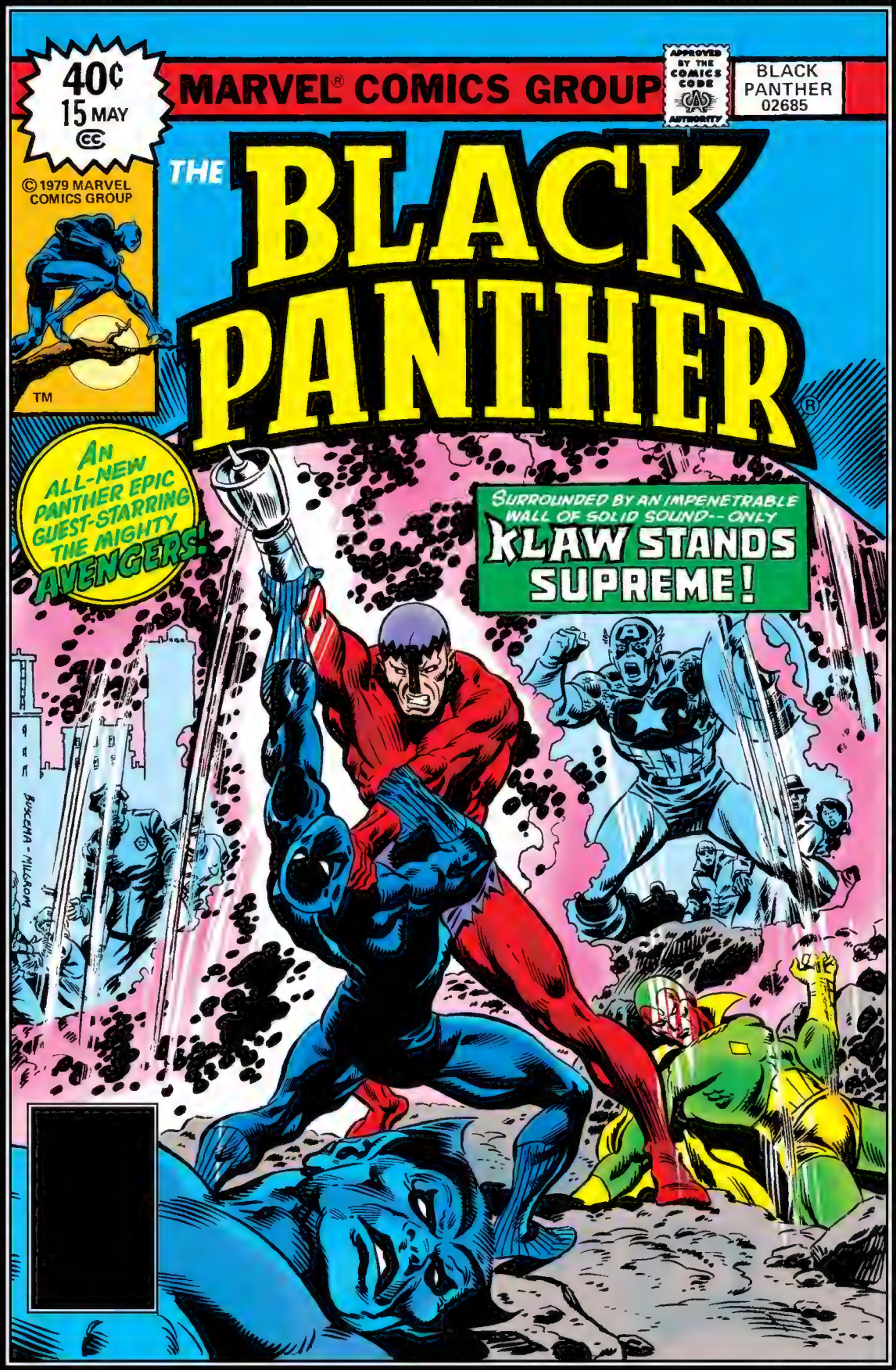

THIS IS DIFFERENT, HERBIE-- I CAN'T--
OWW!
YOU AIN'T LISTENING, BOY!
I'M NOT GIVIN' YOU NO CHOICE! DO WHAT HERBIE SAYS, OR HERBIE'LL WASTE YOU!
LISTEN, JACKIE--YOU GOT THE ELECTRONIC KNOW-HOW TO BUILD ME THE WEAPON I NEED! YOU GONNA BUILD IT, DIG?
Y-YES.
GOOD! THAT WEIRD SOUND HORN IS OVER THERE--ALONG WITH THE BEST STOLEN AUDIO-ELECTRONIC JUNK THAT MONEY CAN BUY!
WELL-- I GUESS THIS SYNTHESIZER IS ABOUT ALL I'LL NEED, ACTUALLY.
THE NIGHT WEARS ON, THE UPTOWN BARS CLOSE AND THE STREETS CAN ALMOST BE CALLED QUIET-- ALL SEEMS AS USUAL ON THUNDERBOLT TURF.
NO ONE HAILS THE ARRIVAL OF A ROYAL VISITOR...
HARLEM! I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW MUCH I'VE MISSED THIS PART OF THE CITY-- ITS RAW SPIRIT STILL SEEMS TO FILL THE AIR!
HERE, MORE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE, DOES THE THRILL AND HOPE OF LIFE DANCE SIDE BY SIDE WITH DANGER AND DESPAIR!
IT'S ABOMINABLE THAT GROUPS LIKE THE THUNDERBOLTS CHOOSE ONLY TO DEAL IN THE LATTER!
DAREDEVIL AND I FOUGHT THEM ONCE*-- BUT THIS IS APPARENTLY A NEW GENERATION!
*DD#69 --ROG.
THE OLD THUNDERBOLT GANG WAS POLITICALLY ORIENTED-- USING RADICAL RHETORIC TO JUSTIFY THEIR CRIMES!
THE NEW GANG SEEMS EVEN MORE VIOLENT AND MUCH YOUNGER-- WITH NO RATIONALIZATION SAVE THEIR OWN MINDLESSNESS!


AND, NOW-- THEY POSSESS ONE OF THE MOST STAGGERING WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION EVER BUILT!
THIS IS THE BUILDING.
PRAISE THE ANCESTORS-- I'VE FOUND THEM IN TIME!
IN THEIR IGNORANCE AND VANITY, THE THUNDERBOLTS DID LITTLE TO CONCEAL THEIR TRAIL.
...THEY'VE WASTED NO TIME FINDING A WAY TO HARNESS THE CONVERTER'S RAW POWER TO THEIR OWN PURPOSES!
CAN YOU DIG IT? WITH THIS THING THE T-BOLTS CAN TAKE OVER THE WHOLE TOWN.
YOU A GENIUS, JACKIE-- IF THIS WORKS, WE GONNA MAKE YOU A MEMBER!
C'MON, LET'S TEST IT OUT.
YEAH, OKAY. IT SHOULD BE PRETTY SIMPLE.
THE HORN DOES ALL THE WORK!
WHOEVER DESIGNED THE THING REALLY IS A GENIUS-- IT'S YEARS AHEAD OF ANYTHING I EVER SAW!
YOUNG FOOLS! YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE POWER YOU'RE PLAYING WITH!
KRAA SSH!!


NO! I CAN'T LET HIM CATCH ME!
IT'D KILL MY PARENTS TO KNOW I'M MIXED UP WITH THE THUNDER-BOLTS!
HHUUMMRG
UNNGGH! SOUND BLAST, CAUGHT ME--BUT I WAS READY FOR IT!
WRRRRRRR
THE PANTHER EASILY ROLLS WITH THE BLOW, BUT FINDS HIMSELF FORCED EVER AWAY BY THE SONIC DEVICE'S PRESSURE FRONT!
MEANWHILE, JACKIE FINDS HIM-SELF STRANGELY... INSPIRED!
I SEEM TO KNOW... JUST THE RIGHT CHORDS TO PLAY.. LIKE IT'S... NOT REALLY ME PLAYIN'!
SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS!
WOW! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO DO THAT!
THIS MACHINE IS SOME KINDA MAGIC!
HE'S CREATED A MONSTROUS ELEPHANT COMPOSED OF SOLIDIFIED SOUND!
THIS CAN'T POSSIBLY BE THE BOY'S DOING, ALONE! IT MUST SOMEHOW BE KLAW'S INFLUENCE!
THUNDERBOLTS
LET ME OUTTA HERE! THIS CAN'T BE REAL!


HE'S ANIMATED THE THING! I CAN AVOID GETTING HIT-- BUT SOONER OR LATER THE BEAST WILL TEAR THE BUILDING DOWN ON TOP OF US ALL!
I'VE GOT TO LURE IT OUT OF THE TENEMENT AND FIND A WAY TO DESTROY IT! BUT HOW DO I DEFEAT A CREATURE MADE OF SOLID SOUND?!
HERE HE COMES AGAIN!
THAT WAS CLOSE! THE BOY IS GAINING MORE CONTROL OVER HIS CREATION...
"... AND LESS CONTROL OVER HIMSELF!
YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME UP THERE, PANTHER!
YOU WON'T EVER ESCAPE ME! I'LL GIVE MY MONSTER WINGS AND CLAWS SO HE CAN GO AFTER YOU... AND TEAR YOU APART!
IT'S CAUGHT ME! I DIDN'T EXPECT SUCH A SWIFT CHANGE! HAVE TO GET LOOSE!


AT LAST I'VE GOTTEN EVEN WITH YOU, PANTHER--AT LAST I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!
HUH?! WHAT YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, MAN?
HERBIE RECEIVES NO ANSWER TO HIS QUERY SAVE THE TRIUMPHANT TRUMPETING OF THE NIGHTMARE BEAST OVERHEAD.
THEN--
SPANG
THE CREATURE-- RELEASED ME! HAVE TO HANG ON TO-- CONSCIOUSNESS!
ROOFTOP BELOW-- I CAN JUST BARELY...
...MAKE IT!
CAP!
I KNOW YOU DIDN'T WANT ANY HELP, T'CHALLA--
--BUT I SOMETIMES HAVE HUNCHES, MYSELF.
I'M GRATEFUL INDEED THAT YOU DECIDED TO FOLLOW THIS ONE UP!
BUT I FEAR THE DANGER IS FAR FROM PAST!
THEN WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER-- AS AVENGERS!
AND, AS THE BEHEMOTH BEARS DOWN ON THEM...
...THE THUNDERBOLTS RIDE INTO THE DAWN-LIT STREETS -- TO CONQUER!
NEXT
THE REVENGE OF THE BLACK PANTHER!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15 MAY
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BLACK PANTHER 02685
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TM
THE BLACK PANTHER®
AN ALL-NEW PANTHER EPIC GUEST-STARRING THE MIGHTY AVENGERS!
SURROUNDED BY AN IMPENETRABLE WALL OF SOLID SOUND--ONLY
KLAW STANDS SUPREME!
BUSCEMA - MILGROM

With the sleekness of the jungle cat whose name he bears, T'Challa— the Prince of Wakanda—stalks both the concrete of the city and the undergrowth of the veldt! So it has been for countless generations of warrior-kings, so it is today— and so shall it be for as long as the law of the jungle dictates that only the swift, the smart, and the strong survive!

Stan Lee PRESENTS:
REVENGE OF THE BLACK PANTHER!
EARLY MORNING IN HARLEM--THINGS ARE MOVING A BIT TOO FAST FOR EXPLANATIONS NOW--SUFFICE TO SAY THAT THE SONIC BEAST HAS STRUCK...
I REGRET THAT YOU SOUGHT TO AID ME, CAPTAIN AMERICA--FOR NOW THIS MONSTROUS CREATION MAY...
...KILL US BOTH!!
ED HANNIGAN WRITER
JERRY BINGHAM PENCILER
GENE DAY INKER
CLEM ROBINS, LETTERER
G. ROUSSOS, COLORIST
ROGER STERN & JIM SHOOTER EDITORS
LG290

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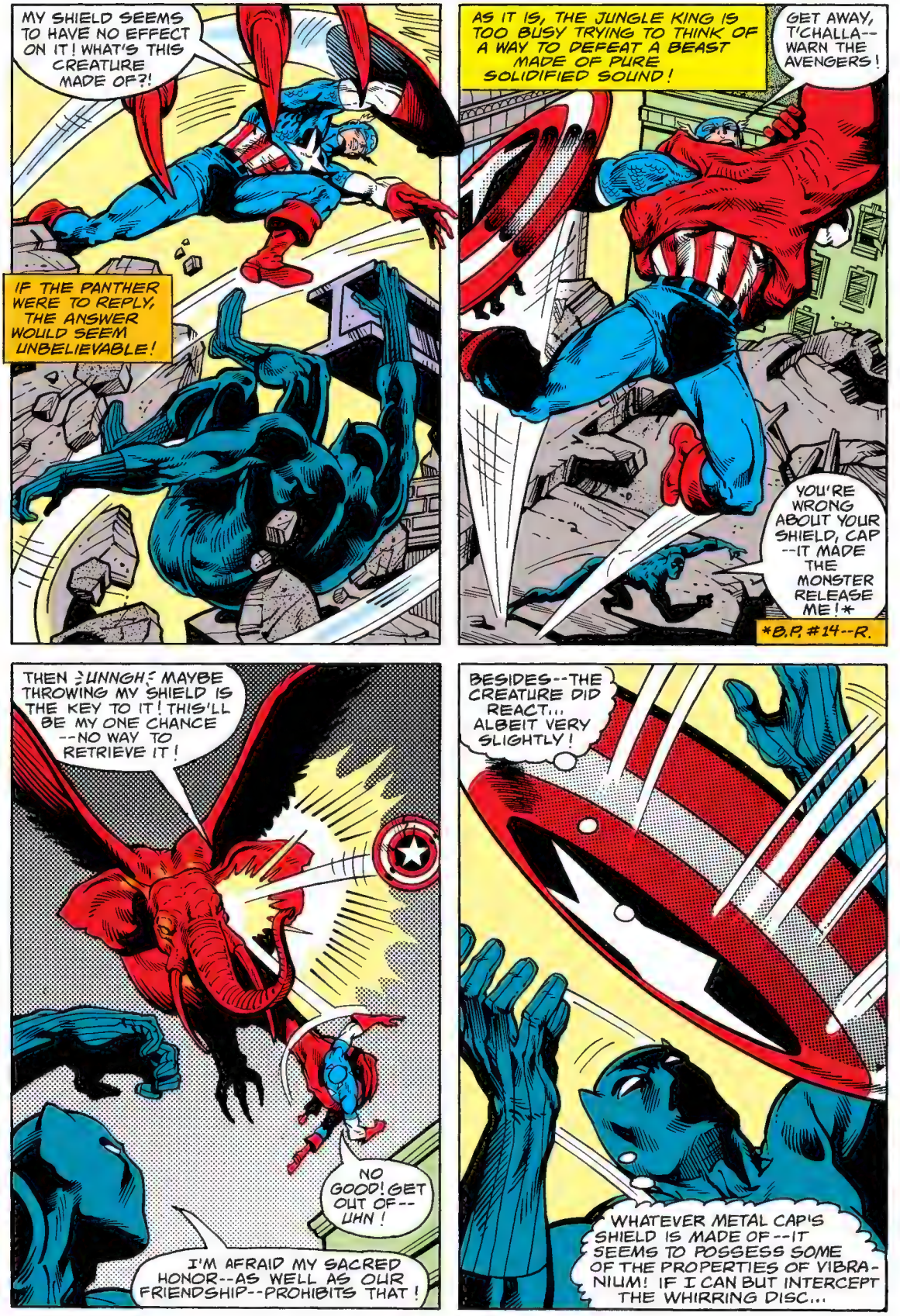
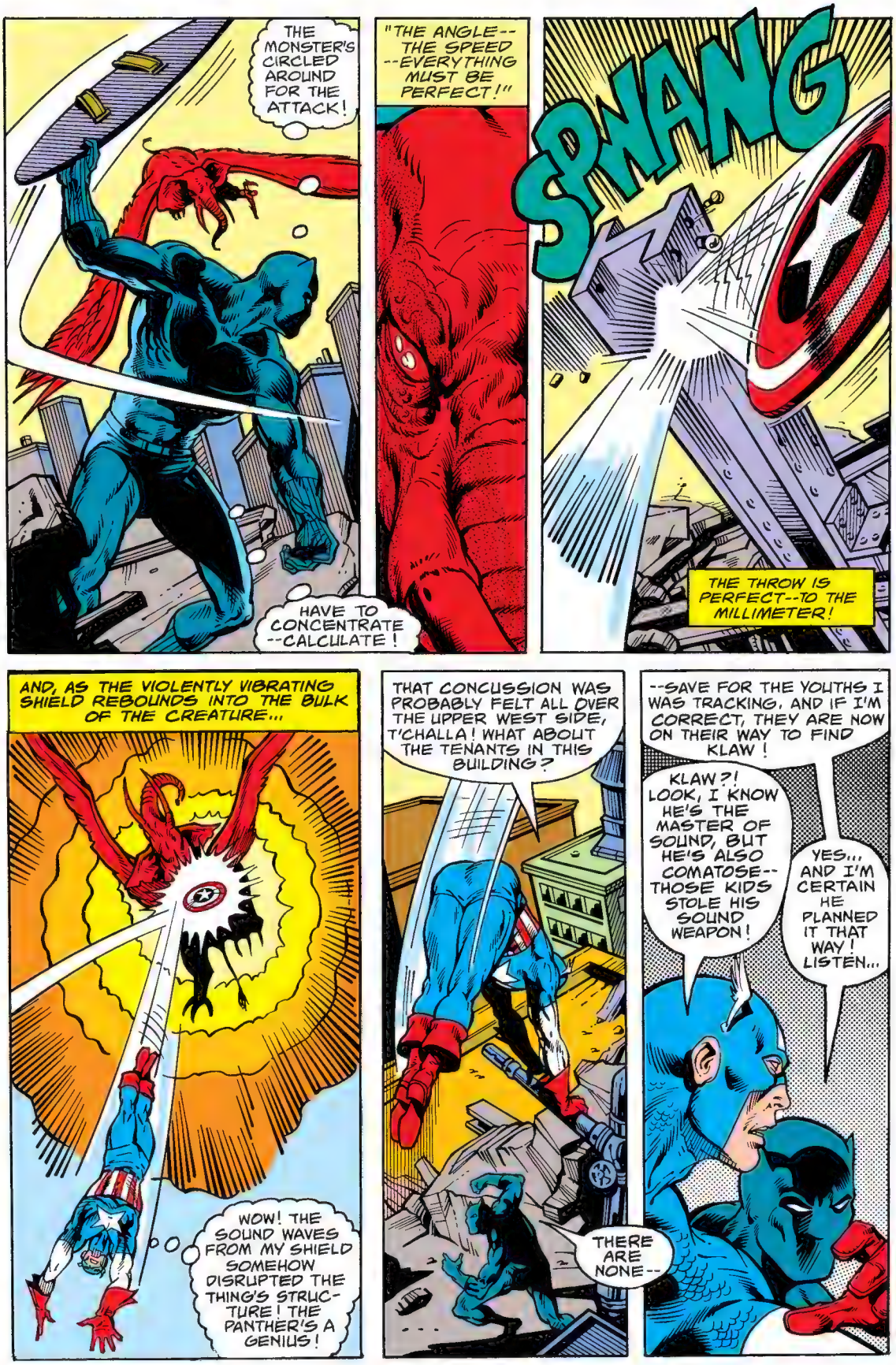
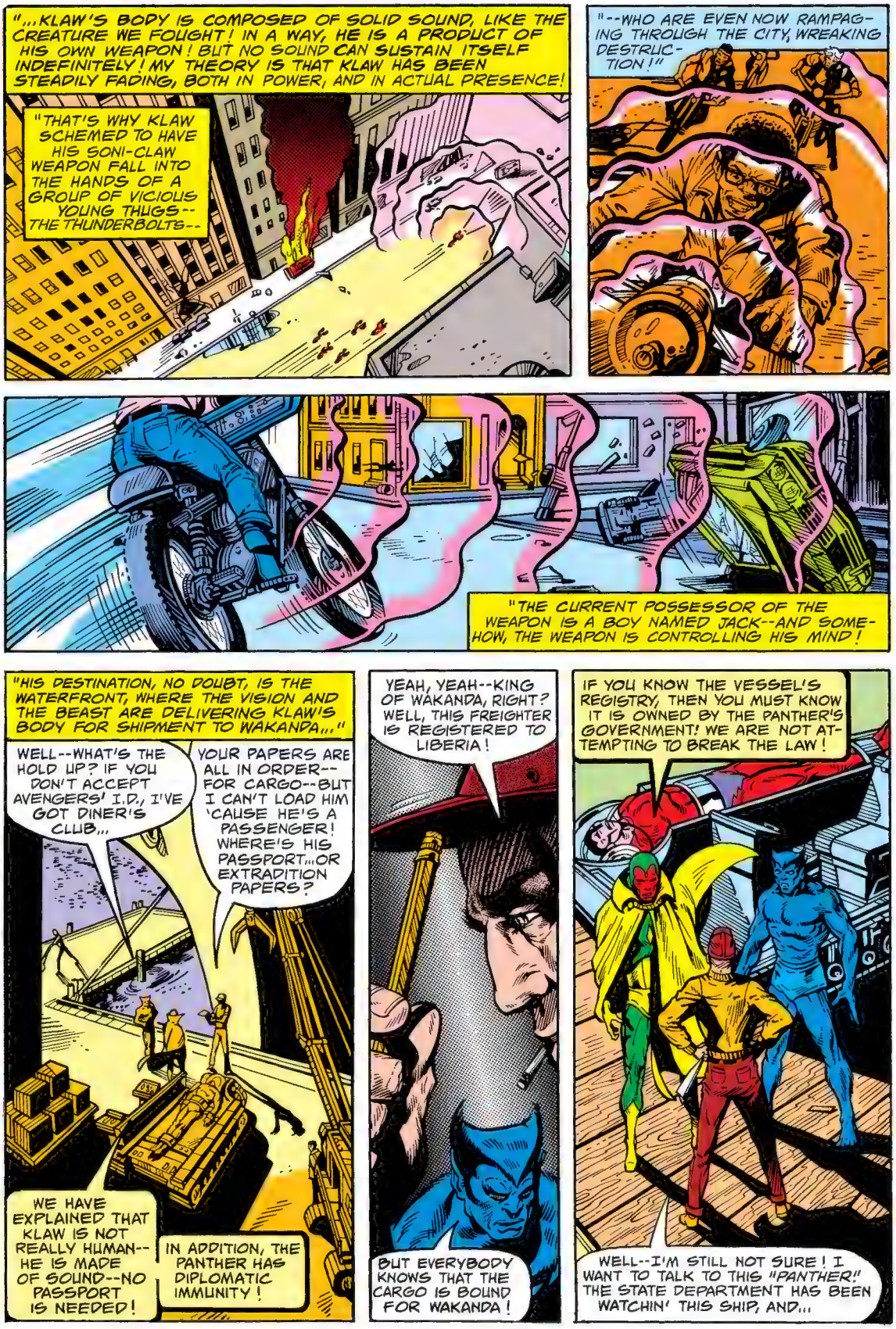
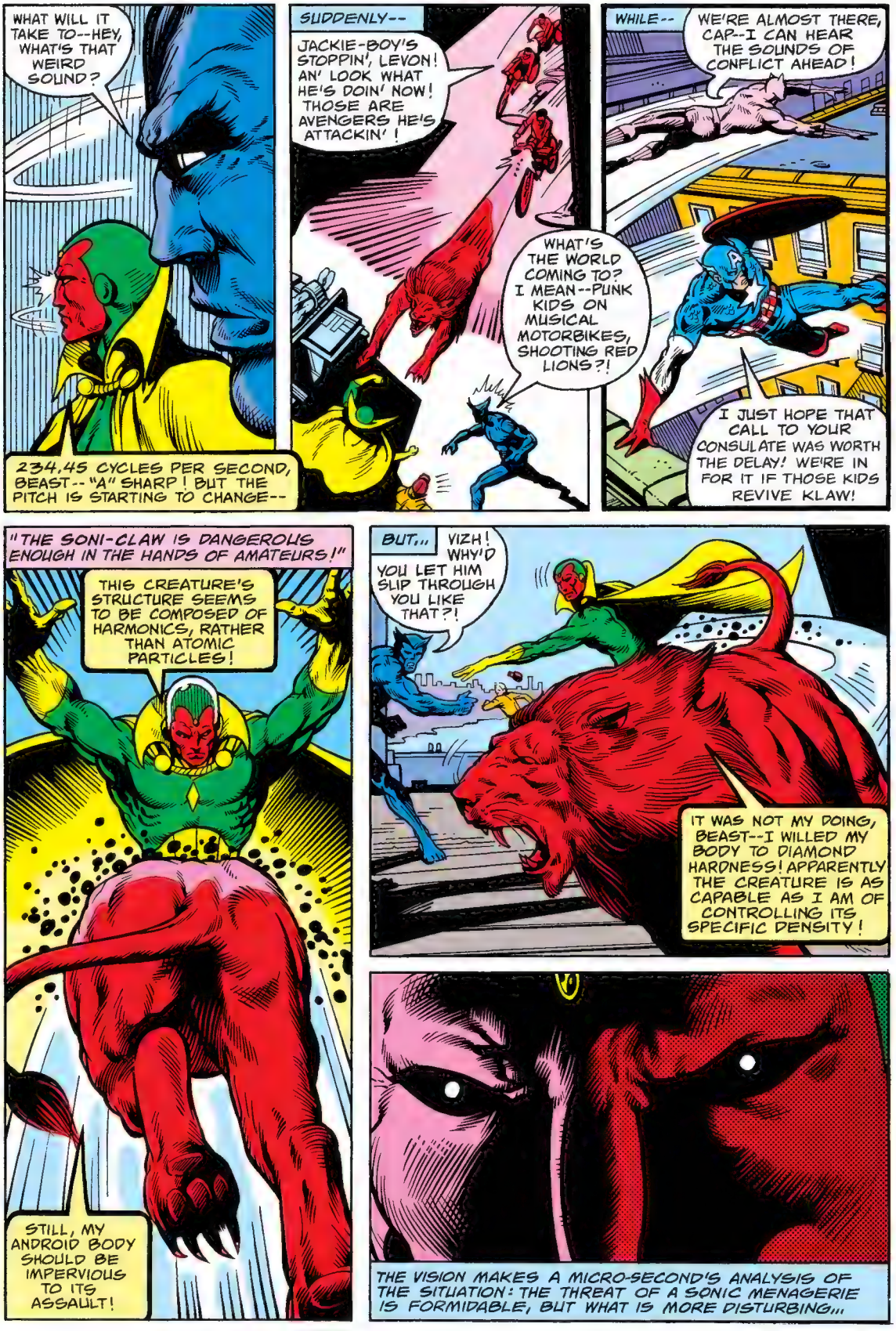

MY SHIELD SEEMS TO HAVE NO EFFECT ON IT! WHAT'S THIS CREATURE MADE OF?!
IF THE PANTHER WERE TO REPLY, THE ANSWER WOULD SEEM UNBELIEVABLE!
AS IT IS, THE JUNGLE KING IS TOO BUSY TRYING TO THINK OF A WAY TO DEFEAT A BEAST MADE OF PURE SOLIDIFIED SOUND!
GET AWAY, T'CHALLA--WARN THE AVENGERS!
YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT YOUR SHIELD, CAP --IT MADE THE MONSTER RELEASE ME!*
*B.P. #14--R.
THEN :UNNGH: MAYBE THROWING MY SHIELD IS THE KEY TO IT! THIS'LL BE MY ONE CHANCE --NO WAY TO RETRIEVE IT!
NO GOOD! GET OUT OF-- UHN!
I'M AFRAID MY SACRED HONOR--AS WELL AS OUR FRIENDSHIP--PROHIBITS THAT!
BESIDES--THE CREATURE DID REACT... ALBEIT VERY SLIGHTLY!
WHATEVER METAL CAP'S SHIELD IS MADE OF--IT SEEMS TO POSSESS SOME OF THE PROPERTIES OF VIBRANIUM! IF I CAN BUT INTERCEPT THE WHIRRING DISC...


THE MONSTER'S CIRCLED AROUND FOR THE ATTACK!
HAVE TO CONCENTRATE --CALCULATE!
"THE ANGLE-- THE SPEED --EVERYTHING MUST BE PERFECT!"
SPANG
THE THROW IS PERFECT--TO THE MILLIMETER!
AND, AS THE VIOLENTLY VIBRATING SHIELD REBOUNDS INTO THE BULK OF THE CREATURE...
WOW! THE SOUND WAVES FROM MY SHIELD SOMEHOW DISRUPTED THE THING'S STRUCTURE! THE PANTHER'S A GENIUS!
THAT CONCUSSION WAS PROBABLY FELT ALL OVER THE UPPER WEST SIDE, T'CHALLA! WHAT ABOUT THE TENANTS IN THIS BUILDING?
THERE ARE NONE--
--SAVE FOR THE YOUTHS I WAS TRACKING, AND IF I'M CORRECT, THEY ARE NOW ON THEIR WAY TO FIND KLAW!
KLAW?! LOOK, I KNOW HE'S THE MASTER OF SOUND, BUT HE'S ALSO COMATOSE-- THOSE KIDS STOLE HIS SOUND WEAPON!
YES... AND I'M CERTAIN HE PLANNED IT THAT WAY! LISTEN...

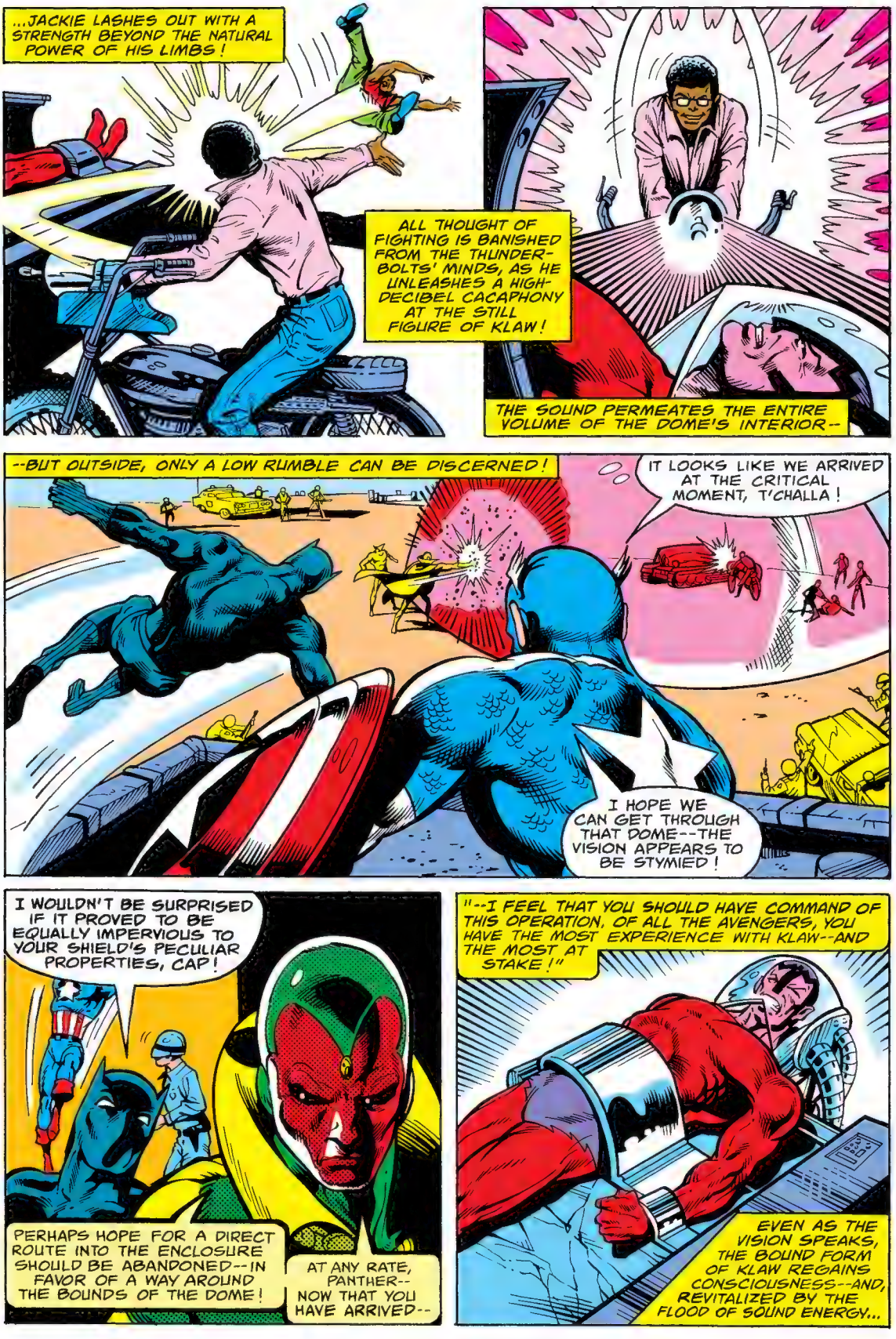

"...KLAW'S BODY IS COMPOSED OF SOLID SOUND, LIKE THE CREATURE WE FOUGHT! IN A WAY, HE IS A PRODUCT OF HIS OWN WEAPON! BUT NO SOUND CAN SUSTAIN ITSELF INDEFINITELY! MY THEORY IS THAT KLAW HAS BEEN STEADILY FADING, BOTH IN POWER, AND IN ACTUAL PRESENCE!
"THAT'S WHY KLAW SCHEMED TO HAVE HIS SONI-CLAW WEAPON FALL INTO THE HANDS OF A GROUP OF VICIOUS YOUNG THUGS--THE THUNDERBOLTS--
"--WHO ARE EVEN NOW RAMPAGING THROUGH THE CITY, WREAKING DESTRUCTION!"
"THE CURRENT POSSESSOR OF THE WEAPON IS A BOY NAMED JACK--AND SOMEHOW, THE WEAPON IS CONTROLLING HIS MIND!
"HIS DESTINATION, NO DOUBT, IS THE WATERFRONT, WHERE THE VISION AND THE BEAST ARE DELIVERING KLAW'S BODY FOR SHIPMENT TO WAKANDA..."
WELL--WHAT'S THE HOLD UP? IF YOU DON'T ACCEPT AVENGERS' I.D., I'VE GOT DINER'S CLUB...
YOUR PAPERS ARE ALL IN ORDER--FOR CARGO--BUT I CAN'T LOAD HIM 'CAUSE HE'S A PASSENGER! WHERE'S HIS PASSPORT...OR EXTRADITION PAPERS?
WE HAVE EXPLAINED THAT KLAW IS NOT REALLY HUMAN--HE IS MADE OF SOUND--NO PASSPORT IS NEEDED!
IN ADDITION, THE PANTHER HAS DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY!
YEAH, YEAH--KING OF WAKANDA, RIGHT? WELL, THIS FREIGHTER IS REGISTERED TO LIBERIA!
BUT EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT THE CARGO IS BOUND FOR WAKANDA!
IF YOU KNOW THE VESSEL'S REGISTRY, THEN YOU MUST KNOW IT IS OWNED BY THE PANTHER'S GOVERNMENT! WE ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO BREAK THE LAW!
WELL--I'M STILL NOT SURE! I WANT TO TALK TO THIS "PANTHER!" THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN WATCHIN' THIS SHIP, AND...

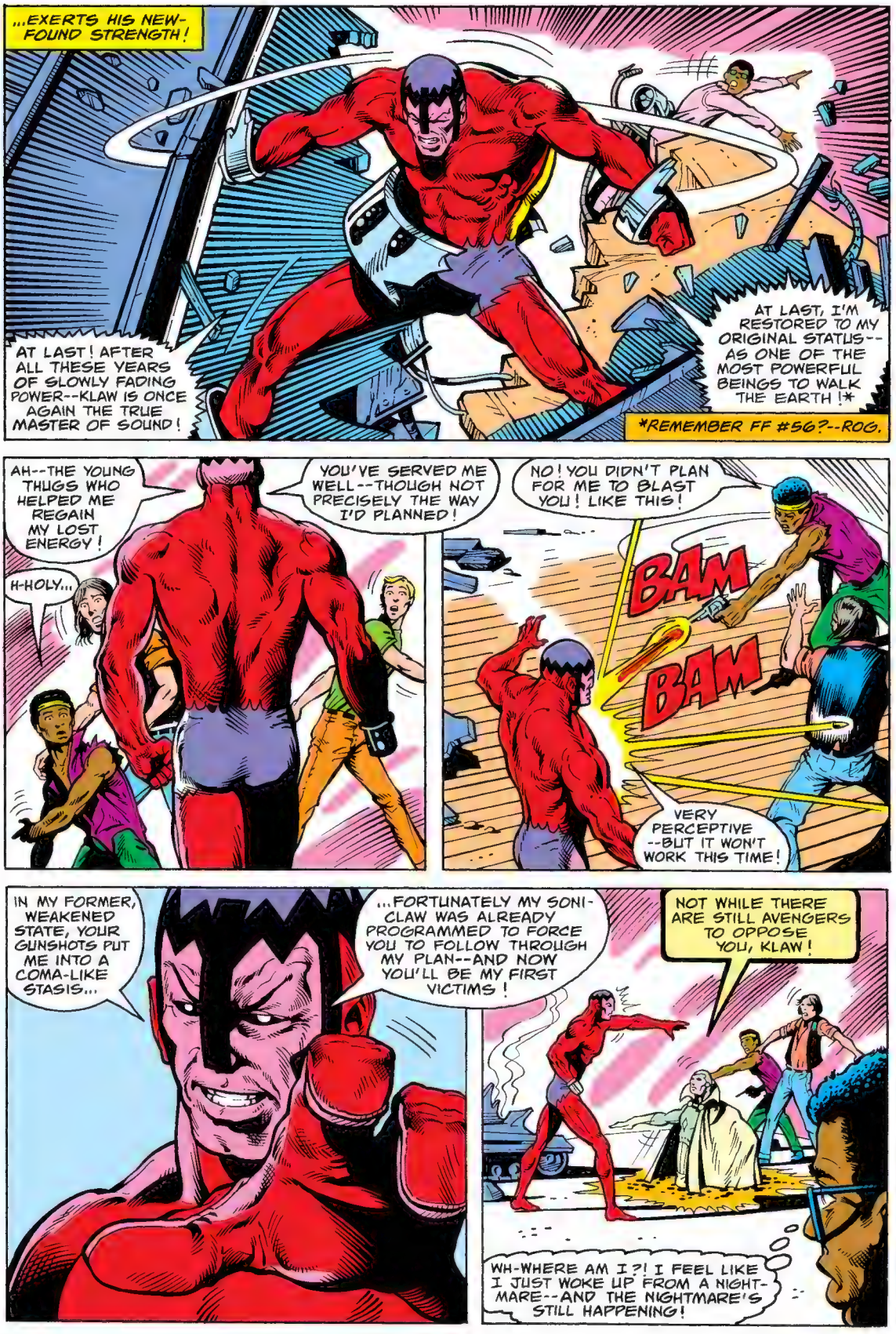

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO--HEY, WHAT'S THAT WEIRD SOUND?
234,45 CYCLES PER SECOND, BEAST--"A" SHARP! BUT THE PITCH IS STARTING TO CHANGE--
SUDDENLY--
JACKIE-BOY'S STOPPIN', LEVON! AN' LOOK WHAT HE'S DOIN' NOW! THOSE ARE AVENGERS HE'S ATTACKIN'!
WHAT'S THE WORLD COMING TO? I MEAN--PUNK KIDS ON MUSICAL MOTORBIKES, SHOOTING RED LIONS?!
WHILE--
WE'RE ALMOST THERE, CAP--I CAN HEAR THE SOUNDS OF CONFLICT AHEAD!
I JUST HOPE THAT CALL TO YOUR CONSULATE WAS WORTH THE DELAY! WE'RE IN FOR IT IF THOSE KIDS REVIVE KLAW!
"THE SONI-CLAW IS DANGEROUS ENOUGH IN THE HANDS OF AMATEURS!"
THIS CREATURE'S STRUCTURE SEEMS TO BE COMPOSED OF HARMONICS, RATHER THAN ATOMIC PARTICLES!
STILL, MY ANDROID BODY SHOULD BE IMPERVIOUS TO ITS ASSAULT!
BUT...
VIZH! WHY'D YOU LET HIM SLIP THROUGH YOU LIKE THAT?!
IT WAS NOT MY DOING, BEAST--I WILLED MY BODY TO DIAMOND HARDNESS! APPARENTLY THE CREATURE IS AS CAPABLE AS I AM OF CONTROLLING ITS SPECIFIC DENSITY!
THE VISION MAKES A MICRO-SECOND'S ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION: THE THREAT OF A SONIC MENAGERIE IS FORMIDABLE, BUT WHAT IS MORE DISTURBING...

...IS THE FACE OF THE YOUTH WHO WIELDS THE WEAPON--LACKING IN SELF-WILL, AND FULL OF INTENT!
THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING, AVENGERS--YOU'VE BEATEN ME IN THE PAST--
...BUT MY VENGEANCE WILL BE ALL THE SWEETER FOR THAT!
THE WORDS HE USES ARE NOT HIS OWN--NOR ARE THE ACTIONS! BUT THEY ARE NONETHELESS DEADLY!
WHOA! I THINK I SEE THE LIGHT!
THE PRODIGAL SOUND HORN HAS RETURNED --VIA OUR YOUTHFUL ADVERSARIES!
THE KID LOOKS HYPNOTIZED! I'M BETTING THAT KLAW HAS HIM PROGRAMMED BY THE WEAPON!
AND TO DE-PROGRAM HIM--I'VE GOTTA GET TO HIM--THROUGH THE CRIMSON RHINO, HERE!
GO TO THE BOTTOM OF THE CLASS, MR. MCCOY--
THE SONIC VERSION OF THE SPECIES IS AS INTRACTABLE AS THE REAL PACHYDERM!
WHUMP
IN OTHER WORDS... YOWTCH!

AT THE SAME MOMENT...
I DON'T KNOW, MAN--BUT WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON JACKIE-BOY, WE GONNA FIND OUT!
HERBIE--WHAT ARE WE DOIN' HERE?
BUT, EVEN AS THE SELF-STYLED THUNDERBOLTS REACH THE ONCE-TIMID JACKIE--
HOLY CRUD! HE'S MAKIN' A DOME OUTTA SOUND!
AND WE'RE TRAPPED IN HERE WITH 'IM!
MEANWHILE, TWO EVENLY MATCHED SIMULOIDS FACE OFF...
...FOR A FINAL CLASH--BESTIAL SAVAGERY VERSUS CALCULATING INTELLIGENCE--EITHER QUALITY WORTH OF FEAR!
NEITHER COMBATANT, HOWEVER, IS CAPABLE OF THAT EMOTION!
I MAY BE ABLE TO DISRUPT THE STRUCTURE OF THIS CREATION--AT RISK OF TEARING MY OWN STRUCTURE APART! BUT THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION IS--
--WILL IT WORK?
WHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE IMPROMPTU ARENA...
C'MON, UGLY--CHARGE, ALREADY, SO I CAN DODGE YOU AGAIN!
THE CREATURE RUMBLES FORWARD, BUT...
NO NEED TO DODGE, BEAST--I BELIEVE I CAN ERADICATE THIS THREAT!
SWELL, VIZH! WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO--WAIT TILL HE TAKES HIS SKIN OFF, AND RUB SAND INTO IT?

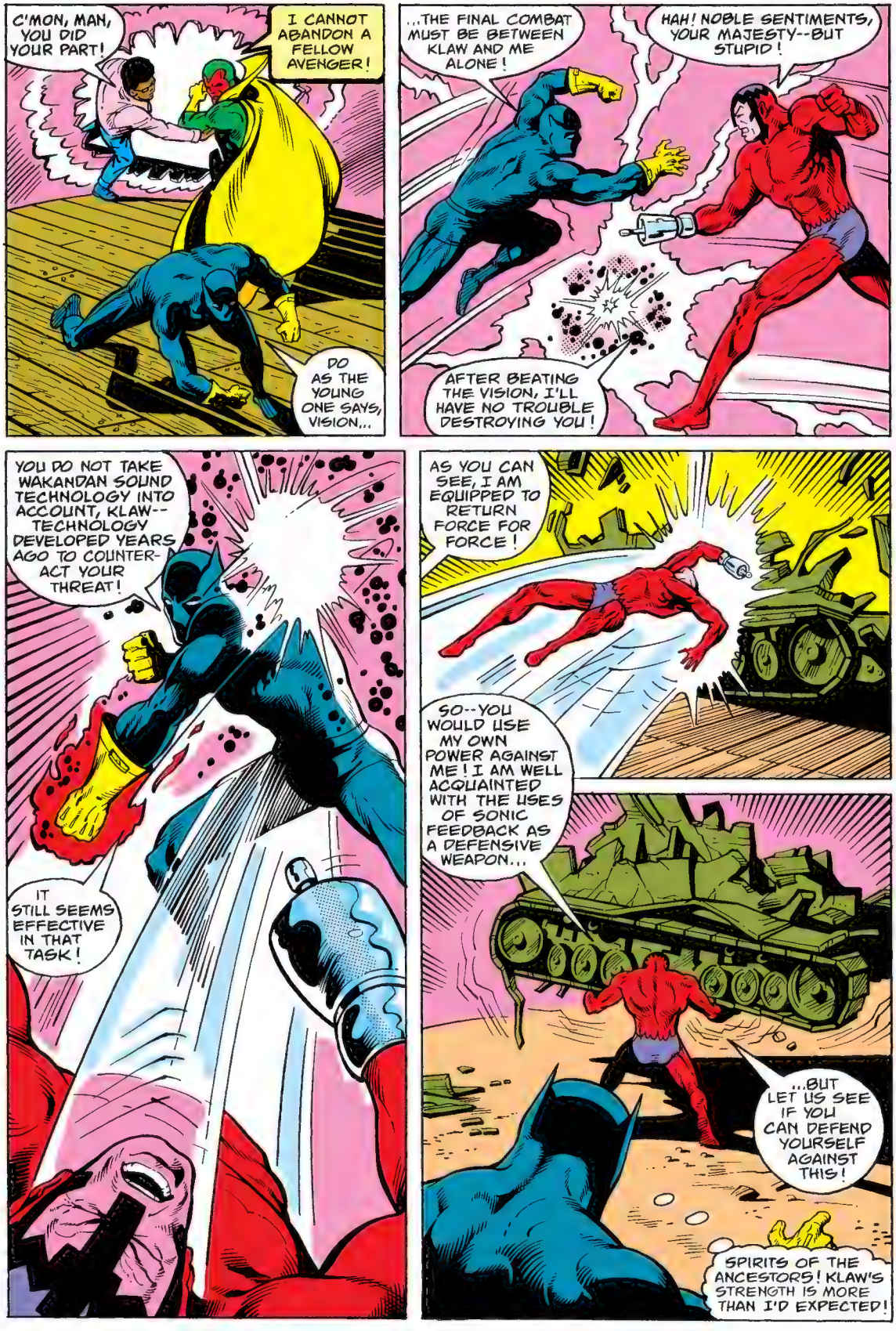
THAT ONLY WORKS IN FOLK TALES, BEAST--MY METHOD IS MUCH SIMPLER!
I MERELY FLUCTUATE MY DENSITY AT A RAPID, CONTROLLED RATE--ESTABLISHING A MASS-FREQUENCY, SO TO SPEAK! AND...
FZ
ZAK!
YEAH--I GET THE STORY. THE SOUND-ANIMALS CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THE CONSTANT CHANGE IN DENSITY, SO--WHOOMP! "SIMPLE", HE SEZ!
HOW ABOUT TRYING THAT TRICK ON THIS DOME--IF WE DON'T STOP THOSE KIDS, WE'RE GONNA CATCH H-E-DOUBLE HOCKEY STICKS!
THIS DOME SEEMS TO ALREADY HAVE A MASS-SPECTRUM! IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO BREACH IT.
IF, INDEED, I CAN PENETRATE IT WITHOUT DAMAGING MYSELF!
AND, INSIDE THE DOME...
HEY, DIG THIS--IT'S THE WEIRD-FACED GUY WE MUGGED!* I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD!
WHAT'S HAPPENIN' HERE, JACKIE? JACKIE?
*LAST ISSUE--R.
JACKIE'S SPACED-OUT--
--BUT I'M GONNA BRING HIM BACK TO EARTH RIGHT QUICK!
BUT, BEFORE HERBIE CAN STRIKE HIS FORMER PAWN...

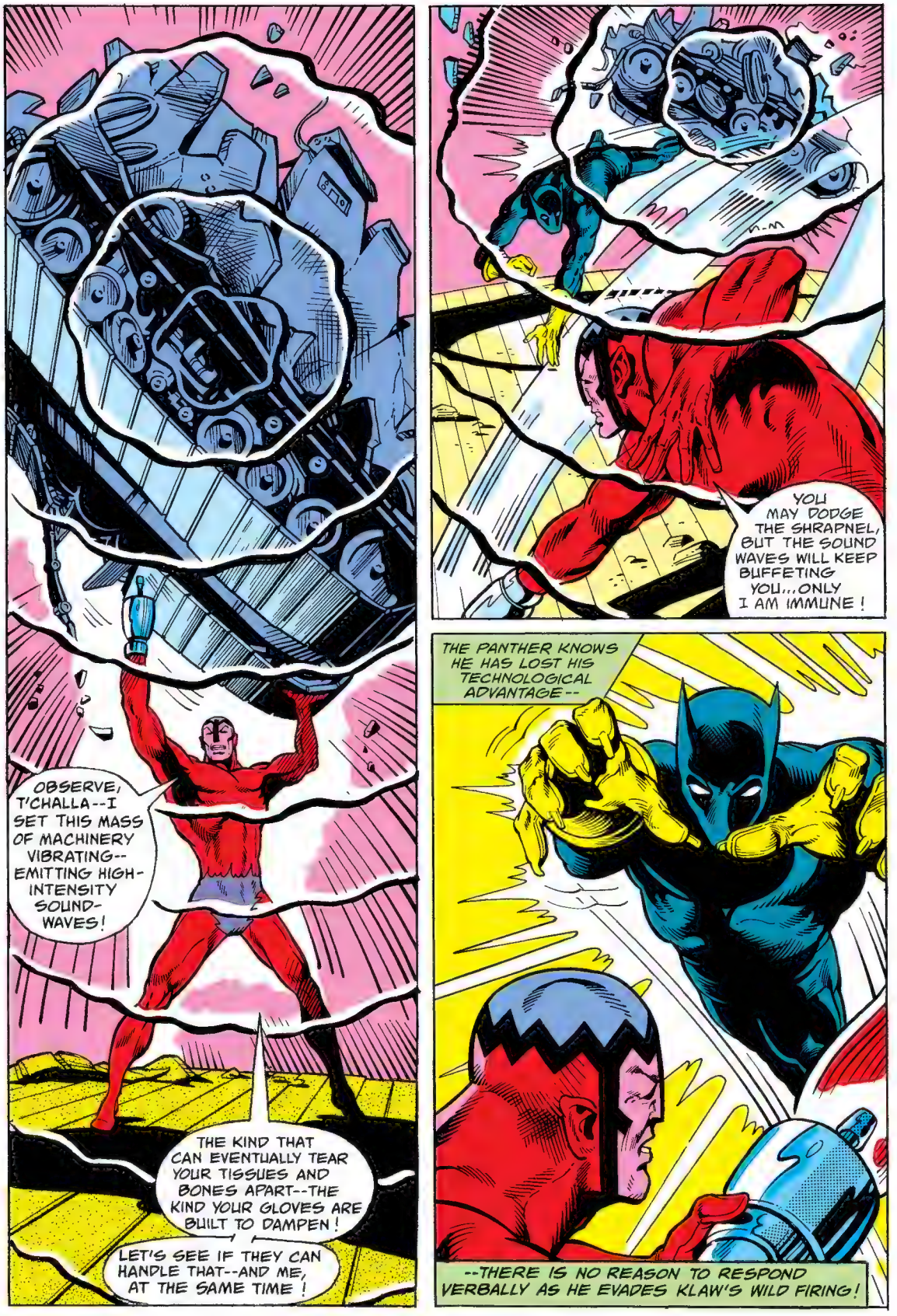

...JACKIE LASHES OUT WITH A STRENGTH BEYOND THE NATURAL POWER OF HIS LIMBS!
ALL THOUGHT OF FIGHTING IS BANISHED FROM THE THUNDERBOLTS' MINDS, AS HE UNLEASHES A HIGH-DECIBEL CACAPHONY AT THE STILL FIGURE OF KLAW!
THE SOUND PERMEATES THE ENTIRE VOLUME OF THE DOME'S INTERIOR--
--BUT OUTSIDE, ONLY A LOW RUMBLE CAN BE DISCERNED!
IT LOOKS LIKE WE ARRIVED AT THE CRITICAL MOMENT, T'CHALLA!
I HOPE WE CAN GET THROUGH THAT DOME--THE VISION APPEARS TO BE STYMIED!
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF IT PROVED TO BE EQUALLY IMPERVIOUS TO YOUR SHIELD'S PECULIAR PROPERTIES, CAP!
PERHAPS HOPE FOR A DIRECT ROUTE INTO THE ENCLOSURE SHOULD BE ABANDONED--IN FAVOR OF A WAY AROUND THE BOUNDS OF THE DOME!
AT ANY RATE, PANTHER--NOW THAT YOU HAVE ARRIVED--
"--I FEEL THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE COMMAND OF THIS OPERATION, OF ALL THE AVENGERS, YOU HAVE THE MOST EXPERIENCE WITH KLAW--AND THE MOST AT STAKE!"
EVEN AS THE VISION SPEAKS, THE BOUND FORM OF KLAW REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS--AND, REVITALIZED BY THE FLOOD OF SOUND ENERGY...

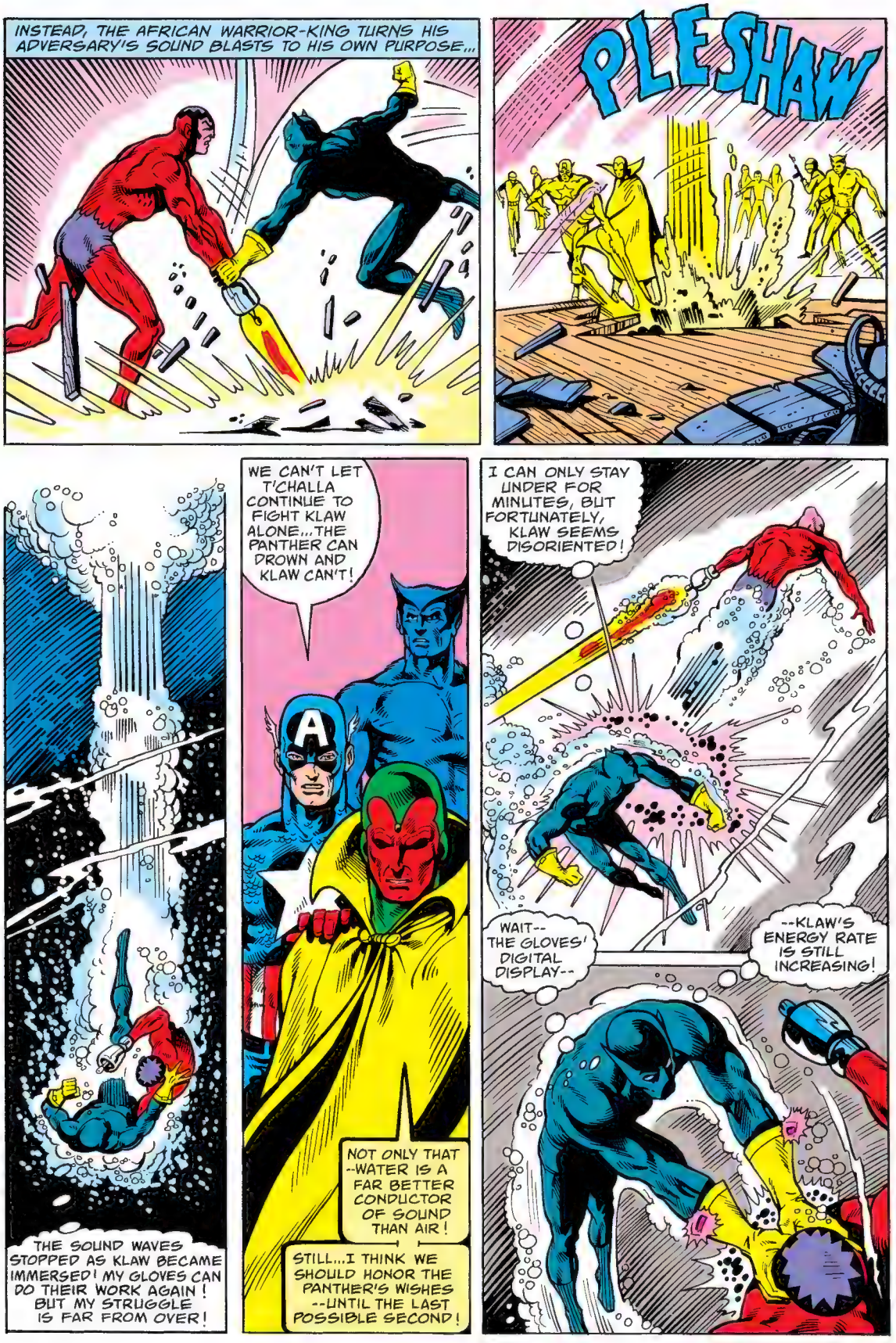

...EXERTS HIS NEW-FOUND STRENGTH!
AT LAST! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS OF SLOWLY FADING POWER--KLAW IS ONCE AGAIN THE TRUE MASTER OF SOUND!
AT LAST, I'M RESTORED TO MY ORIGINAL STATUS--AS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS TO WALK THE EARTH!*
*REMEMBER FF #56?--ROG.
AH--THE YOUNG THUGS WHO HELPED ME REGAIN MY LOST ENERGY!
H-HOLY...
YOU'VE SERVED ME WELL--THOUGH NOT PRECISELY THE WAY I'D PLANNED!
NO! YOU DIDN'T PLAN FOR ME TO BLAST YOU! LIKE THIS!
BAM
BAM
VERY PERCEPTIVE --BUT IT WON'T WORK THIS TIME!
IN MY FORMER, WEAKENED STATE, YOUR GUNSHOTS PUT ME INTO A COMA-LIKE STASIS...
...FORTUNATELY MY SONI-CLAW WAS ALREADY PROGRAMMED TO FORCE YOU TO FOLLOW THROUGH MY PLAN--AND NOW YOU'LL BE MY FIRST VICTIMS!
NOT WHILE THERE ARE STILL AVENGERS TO OPPOSE YOU, KLAW!
WH-WHERE AM I?! I FEEL LIKE I JUST WOKE UP FROM A NIGHT-MARE--AND THE NIGHTMARE'S STILL HAPPENING!

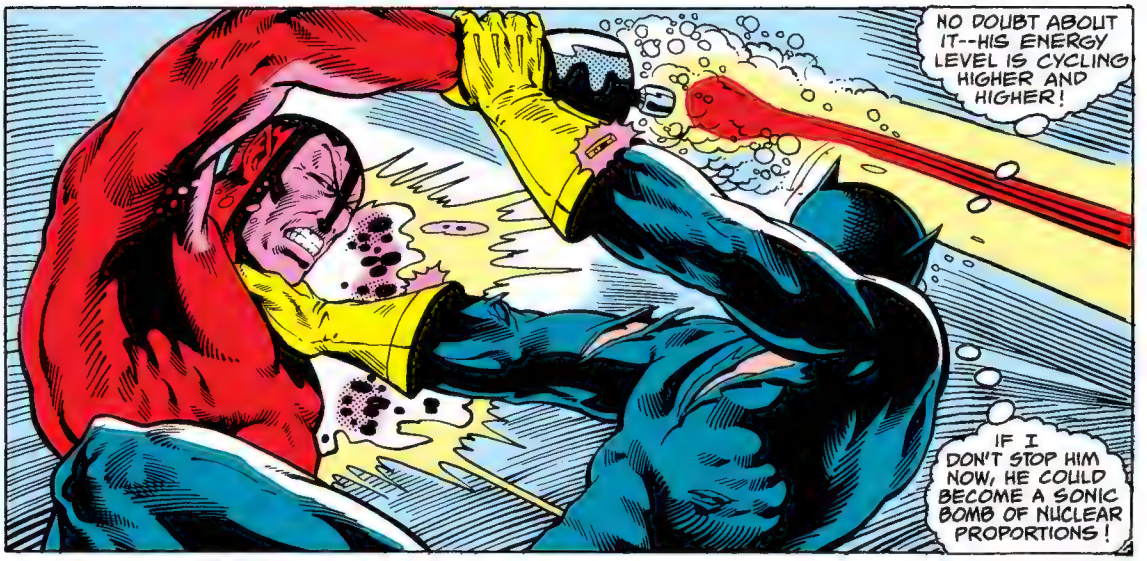
THE AVENGERS, eh?! I'M NOT SURPRISED--NOW I WON'T HAVE TO GO LOOKING FOR YOU! I'LL JUST KILL YOU HERE!
BRAVADO IS WASTED ON ME, KLAW--
--YOU HAVE YET TO RETRIEVE YOUR WEAPON, AND I INTEND TO PREVENT YOU FROM EVER DOING SO!
FOOL! I DON'T NEED MY SONI-CLAW TO DEFEAT THE LIKES OF YOU!
YOU MAY POSSESS THE POWER TO VANQUISH ME--BUT THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMEONE TO FIGHT YOU, NO MATTER HOW MANY YOU CONQUER!
INEVITABLY, YOU WILL FALL!
THERE'S NOTHING INEVITABLE ABOUT IT! NO ONE CAN STOP ME NOW!
STOP RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE!
THIS IS A POLICE EMERGENCY ZONE--NO CIVILIANS ALLOWED!
NO--LET THAT CAR THROUGH, OFFICER. THEY'RE CARRYING A VITAL PACKAGE.
GREETINGS, MY CHIEFTAIN. I TRUST THAT TAKU AND I HAVE ARRIVED IN TIME!
THIS CITY'S SURFIET OF MOTOR VEHICLES IMPEDED OUR PROGRESS FROM THE CONSULATE!
YOU'VE DONE WELL, N'YAGA!
THAT'S THE SECRET WEAPON YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR--A PAIR OF GLOVES?
NOT JUST GLOVES, CAP--THEY'RE VIB-RANIUM DAMPED!
WELL--THAT CERTAINLY MEANS A LOT TO ALL OF US!

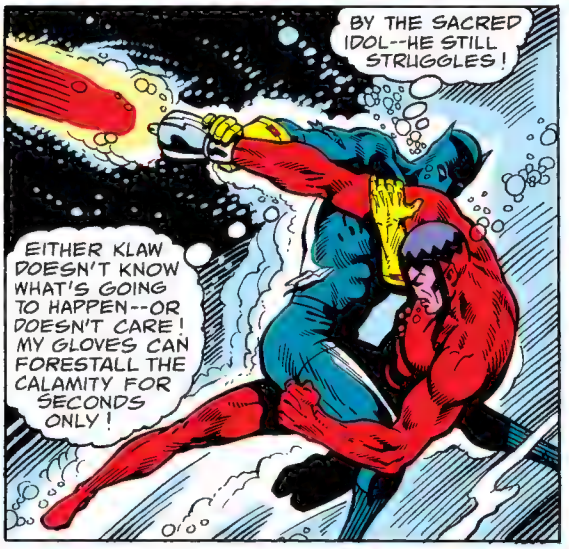
WHAT IT MEANS, BEAST, IS THAT THEY HAVE THE CAPACITY TO DEADEN SOUND WAVES--IN CONTROLLED AMOUNTS!
THE GLOVES' CIRCUITRY MONITORS THE INTENSITY OF THE SOUND ABSORBED BY THE VIBRANIUM CLAWS--ENABLING ME TO READ IT OFF FROM A DIGITAL DISPLAY!
THUS, I CAN GRASP OR TEAR KLAW'S SOUND CONSTRUCTS AT WILL! HOWEVER, A CERTAIN PORTION OF EXCESS ENERGY WILL BE RELEASED --SO PLEASE STAND BACK!
ZZZAOK!
HOLY COW! HE AIN'T KIDDIN' AROUND!
AND, WHILE THE PANTHER ATTEMPTS TO CLAW HIS WAY INTO THE SOLID BUBBLE, THE VISION FIGHTS A DESPERATE HOLDING ACTION...
FACE IT, AVENGER-- YOU'RE WEARING DOWN! NOT EVEN YOUR ANDROID BODY CAN WITHSTAND CONSTANT POUNDING SOUND ASSAULTS!
PERHAPS --BUT HOW LONG CAN YOU SUSTAIN SUCH AN ENERGY OUTPUT?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YOU, VISION? MY POWER IS STILL INCREASING! I CAN AFFORD TO DO THIS...
...UNTIL YOU CRUMPLE --WHICH WON'T BE LONG!
THE VISION HOLDS OUT FOR NEARLY A MINUTE, BUT FINALLY...
YOU'RE A TOUGH ONE, AVENGER-- BUT I KNEW YOU'D FOLD!
ONCE MY SONI-CLAW IS FIRMLY IN PLACE...
...THE WORLD WILL BE MINE FOR THE TAKING!
STILL DREAMING OF CONQUEST, KLAW?
SO! THE CURSED KING OF THE WAKANDAS! COME MEET YOUR DOOM, T'CHALLA!


C'MON, MAN, YOU DID YOUR PART!
I CANNOT ABANDON A FELLOW AVENGER!
DO AS THE YOUNG ONE SAYS, VISION...
...THE FINAL COMBAT MUST BE BETWEEN KLAW AND ME ALONE!
HAH! NOBLE SENTIMENTS, YOUR MAJESTY--BUT STUPID!
AFTER BEATING THE VISION, I'LL HAVE NO TROUBLE DESTROYING YOU!
YOU DO NOT TAKE WAKANDAN SOUND TECHNOLOGY INTO ACCOUNT, KLAW-- TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPED YEARS AGO TO COUNTER-ACT YOUR THREAT!
IT STILL SEEMS EFFECTIVE IN THAT TASK!
AS YOU CAN SEE, I AM EQUIPPED TO RETURN FORCE FOR FORCE!
SO--YOU WOULD USE MY OWN POWER AGAINST ME! I AM WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE USES OF SONIC FEEDBACK AS A DEFENSIVE WEAPON...
...BUT LET US SEE IF YOU CAN DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST THIS!
SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS! KLAW'S STRENGTH IS MORE THAN I'D EXPECTED!

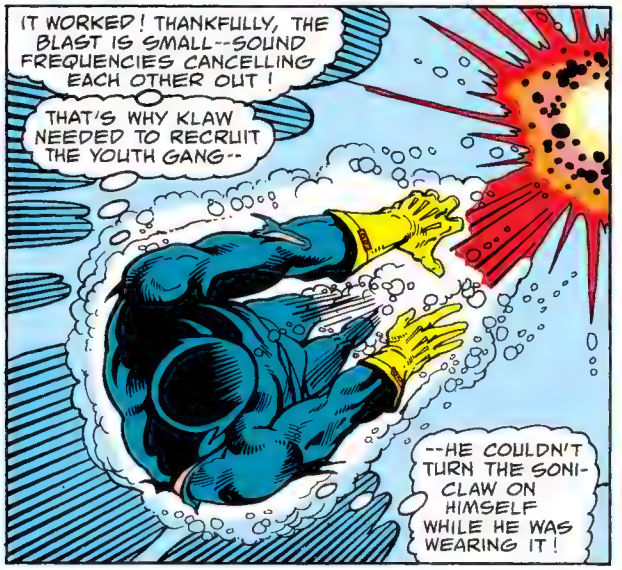

OBSERVE, T'CHALLA--I SET THIS MASS OF MACHINERY VIBRATING--EMITTING HIGH-INTENSITY SOUND-WAVES!
THE KIND THAT CAN EVENTUALLY TEAR YOUR TISSUES AND BONES APART--THE KIND YOUR GLOVES ARE BUILT TO DAMPEN!
LET'S SEE IF THEY CAN HANDLE THAT--AND ME, AT THE SAME TIME!
YOU MAY DODGE THE SHRAPNEL, BUT THE SOUND WAVES WILL KEEP BUFFETING YOU...ONLY I AM IMMUNE!
THE PANTHER KNOWS HE HAS LOST HIS TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE--
--THERE IS NO REASON TO RESPOND VERBALLY AS HE EVADES KLAW'S WILD FIRING!

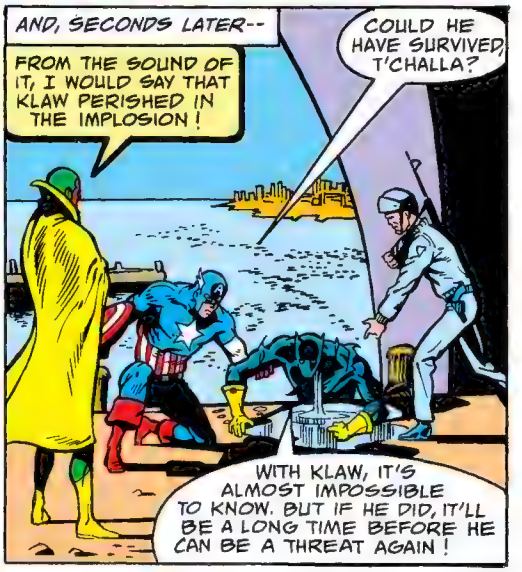

INSTEAD, THE AFRICAN WARRIOR-KING TURNS HIS ADVERSARY'S SOUND BLASTS TO HIS OWN PURPOSE...
PLESHAW
THE SOUND WAVES STOPPED AS KLAW BECAME IMMERSED! MY GLOVES CAN DO THEIR WORK AGAIN! BUT MY STRUGGLE IS FAR FROM OVER!
WE CAN'T LET T'CHALLA CONTINUE TO FIGHT KLAW ALONE...THE PANTHER CAN DROWN AND KLAW CAN'T!
NOT ONLY THAT --WATER IS A FAR BETTER CONDUCTOR OF SOUND THAN AIR!
STILL...I THINK WE SHOULD HONOR THE PANTHER'S WISHES --UNTIL THE LAST POSSIBLE SECOND!
I CAN ONLY STAY UNDER FOR MINUTES, BUT FORTUNATELY, KLAW SEEMS DISORIENTED!
WAIT-- THE GLOVES' DIGITAL DISPLAY--
--KLAW'S ENERGY RATE IS STILL INCREASING!


NO DOUBT ABOUT IT--HIS ENERGY LEVEL IS CYCLING HIGHER AND HIGHER!
IF I DON'T STOP HIM NOW, HE COULD BECOME A SONIC BOMB OF NUCLEAR PROPORTIONS!

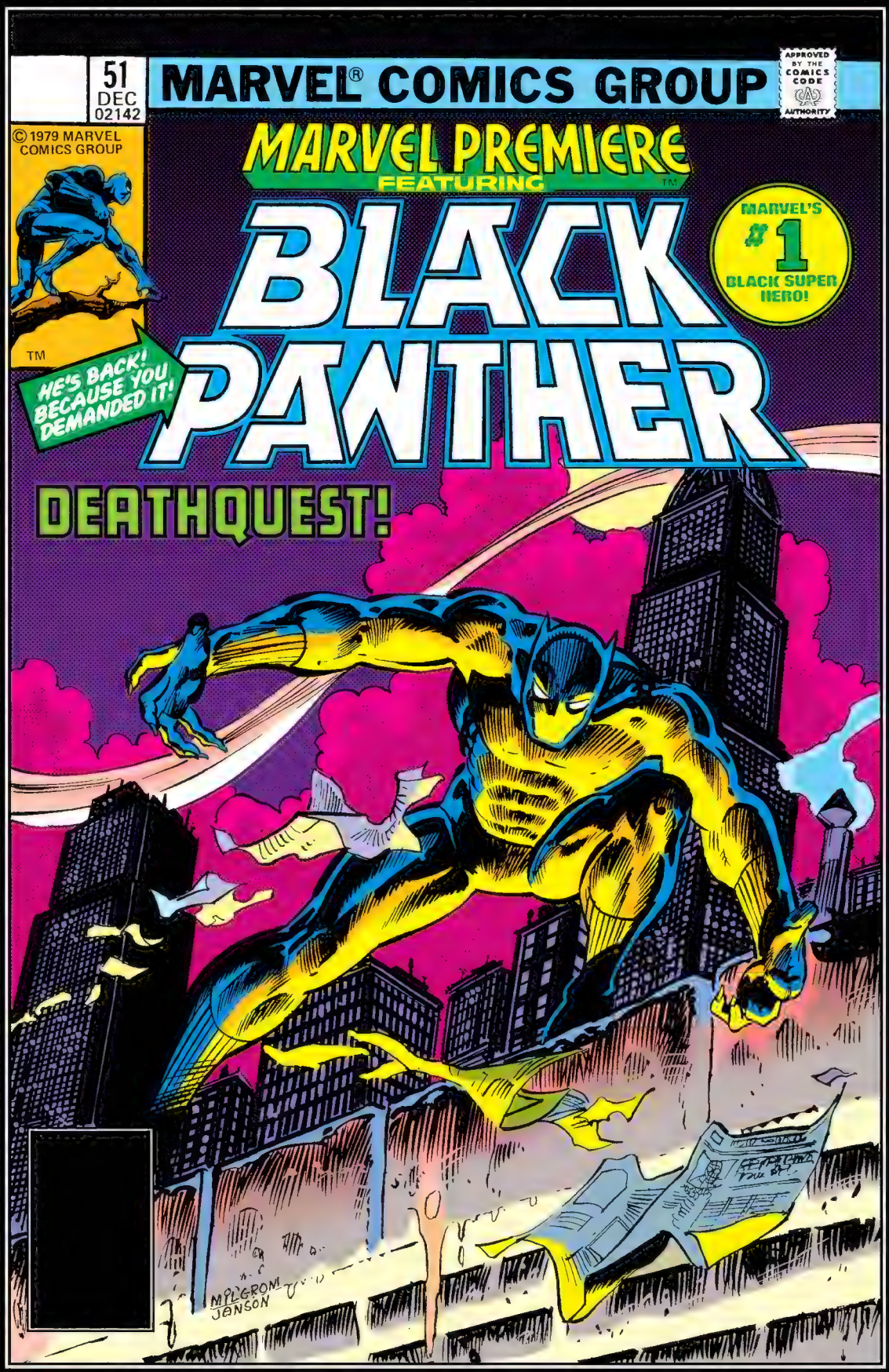

BY THE SACRED IDOL--HE STILL STRUGGLES!
EITHER KLAW DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN--OR DOESN'T CARE! MY GLOVES CAN FORESTALL THE CALAMITY FOR SECONDS ONLY!

THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO SET UP A FEEDBACK LOOP ,,,INTERNALIZE THE ENERGY RELEASE,,,
,,,BY TURNING KLAW'S WEAPON ON HIMSELF!


IT WORKED! THANKFULLY, THE BLAST IS SMALL--SOUND FREQUENCIES CANCELLING EACH OTHER OUT!
THAT'S WHY KLAW NEEDED TO RECRUIT THE YOUTH GANG--
--HE COULDN'T TURN THE SONI-CLAW ON HIMSELF WHILE HE WAS WEARING IT!


AND, SECONDS LATER--
FROM THE SOUND OF IT, I WOULD SAY THAT KLAW PERISHED IN THE IMPLOSION!
COULD HE HAVE SURVIVED, T'CHALLA?
WITH KLAW, IT'S ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW. BUT IF HE DID, IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE HE CAN BE A THREAT AGAIN!

IF HE EVER DOES RETURN, HE WILL FIND THE BLACK PANTHER READY TO BRING HIM TO JUSTICE !
EASY, PANTHER--THIS IS NO TIME TO GO ON THE STUMP !
LET'S GET HIM TO HIS LIMO, CAP !
AND, AS THE DIPLOMATIC VEHICLE ROARS OFF, LEAVING A CLUSTER OF DISAPPOINTED REPORTERS IN ITS WAKE...
WELL, "THUNDERBOLTS" --LOOKS LIKE I'D BETTER READ YOU YOUR RIGHTS !
MEANWHILE, AT THE WAKANDAN CONSULATE--
WELL--THE "PANTHER-DEVIL" CERTAINLY HAS SOME SET-UP HERE ! I WONDER IF HE'LL REMEMBER US !
WAKANDAN
IF HE DOESN'T, WE'LL GIVE HIM REASON TO SOON ENOUGH !
AH--MR. KEVIN TRUBLOOD AND MISS MONICA LYNNE, WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING YOU !
WHAT ?! THE PANTHER KNEW WE WERE COMING? THEN WHY--?
FORGIVE ME-- I DID NOT MAKE MYSELF CLEAR. T'CHALLA KNOWS NOTHING OF YOUR VISIT !
WE THOUGHT IT WISEST THAT YOU EXPLAIN YOUR PRESENCE HERE YOURSELVES !
PLEASE ENTER.
THE DOOR CLOSES, AND NONE ARE AWARE OF YET ANOTHER VISITOR !
AT LAST, I HAVE ARRIVED !
AND NOW THAT I HAVE FOUND THE PANTHER...THE PANTHER SHALL FIND DEATH !
TO BE CONTINUED-- IN THE PAGES OF MARVEL PREMIERE!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FEATURING
BLACK PANTHER
MARVEL'S #1 BLACK SUPER HERO!
HE'S BACK! BECAUSE YOU DEMANDED IT!
DEATHQUEST!
MILGROM
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Stan Lee PRESENTS:
THE RETURN OF THE BLACK PANTHER!
The KILLING OF WINDEAGLE!
EMBASSY ROW, NEW YORK CITY: THE PANTHER RETURNS TO HIS WAKANDAN CONSULATE...
WHAT TRANSPIRES HERE, OMORO? ARE THOSE MEN DOING WHAT I THINK THEY'RE DOING?!
I COULD NOT STOP THEM, MY KING-- THEY ARE MOST UNDIPLOMATIC MEN!
T'CHALLA, IT IS SACRILEGE! YOU MUST PUNISH THEM!
ED HANNIGAN WRITER
JERRY BINGHAM PENCILER
GENE DAY INKER
DIANA ALBERS LETTERER
BOB SHAREN COLORIST
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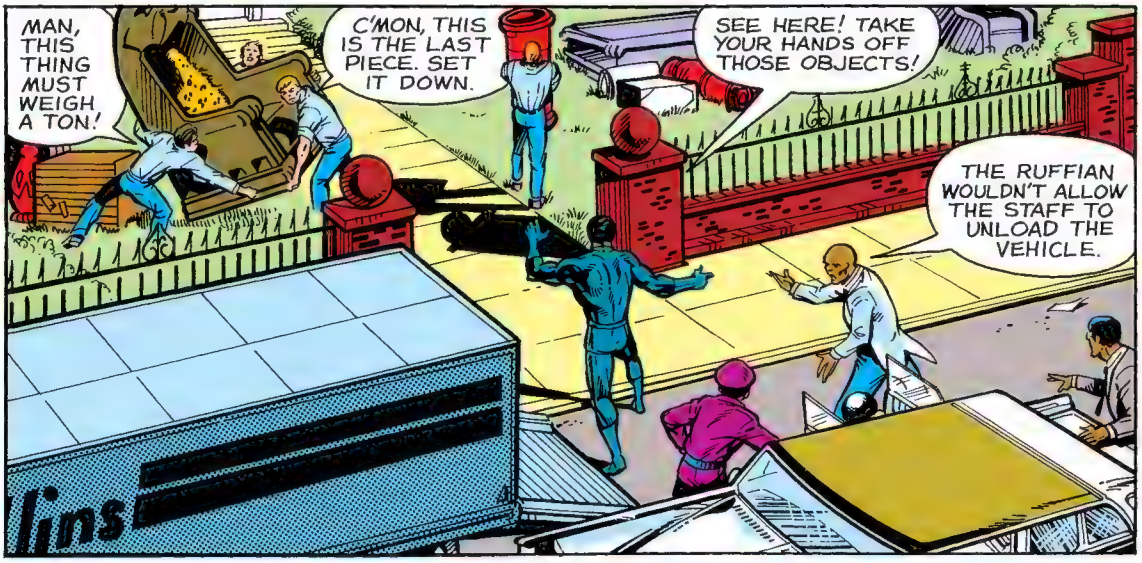
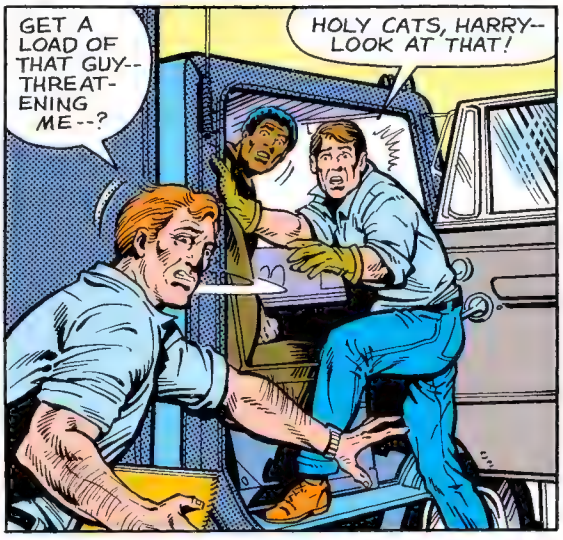
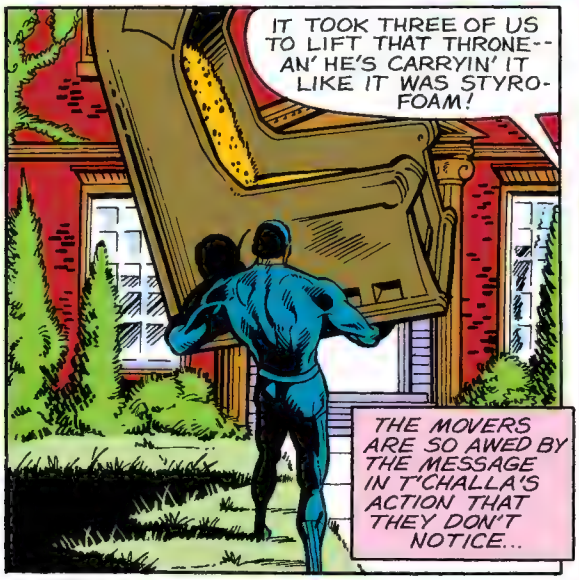

MAN, THIS THING MUST WEIGH A TON!
C'MON, THIS IS THE LAST PIECE. SET IT DOWN.
SEE HERE! TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF THOSE OBJECTS!
THE RUFFIAN WOULDN'T ALLOW THE STAFF TO UNLOAD THE VEHICLE.

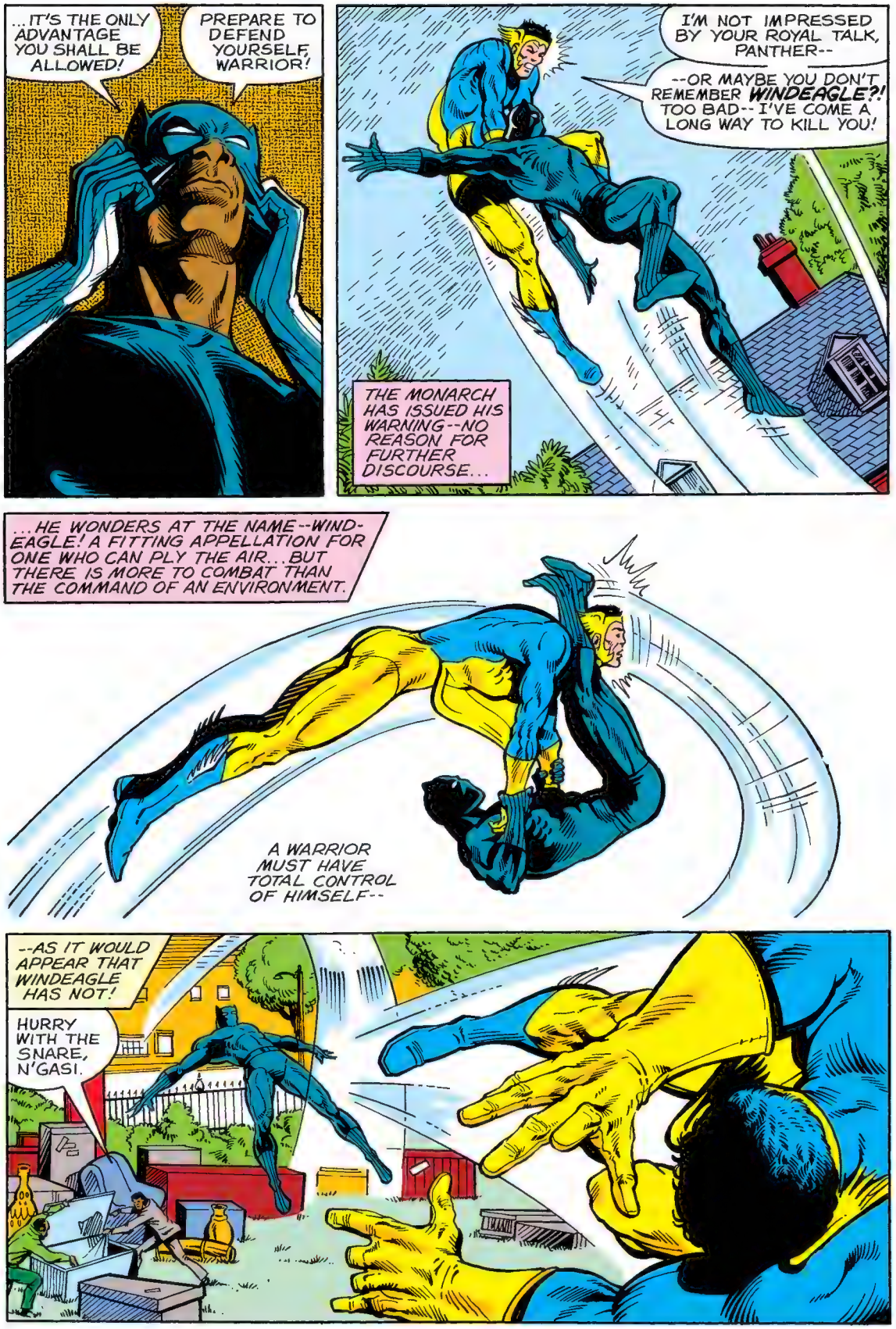
AM I TO UNDERSTAND THAT THESE ARTICLES HAVE BEEN HANDLED BY AMERICANS SINCE THEY ARRIVED AT THE AIRPORT?
UNION RULES, MAC! MIND SIGNING FOR IT?
I'LL SIGN... THEN YOU MUST LEAVE IMMEDIATELY! YOUR LIFE IS IN SERIOUS DANGER!
SURE, SURE. TAKE IT UP WITH MY SHOP STEWARD!

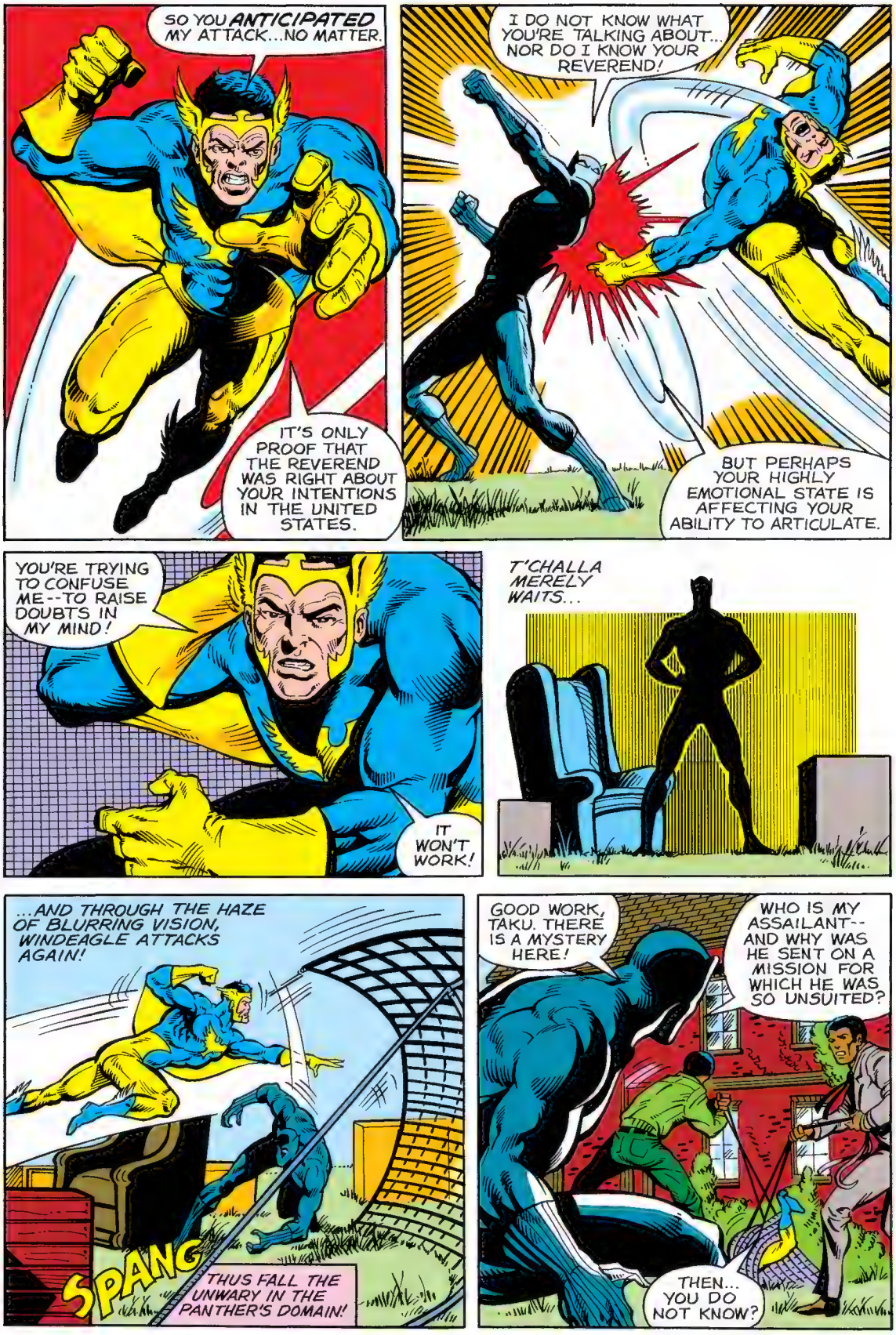

GET A LOAD OF THAT GUY-- THREAT-ENING ME--?
HOLY CATS, HARRY-- LOOK AT THAT!

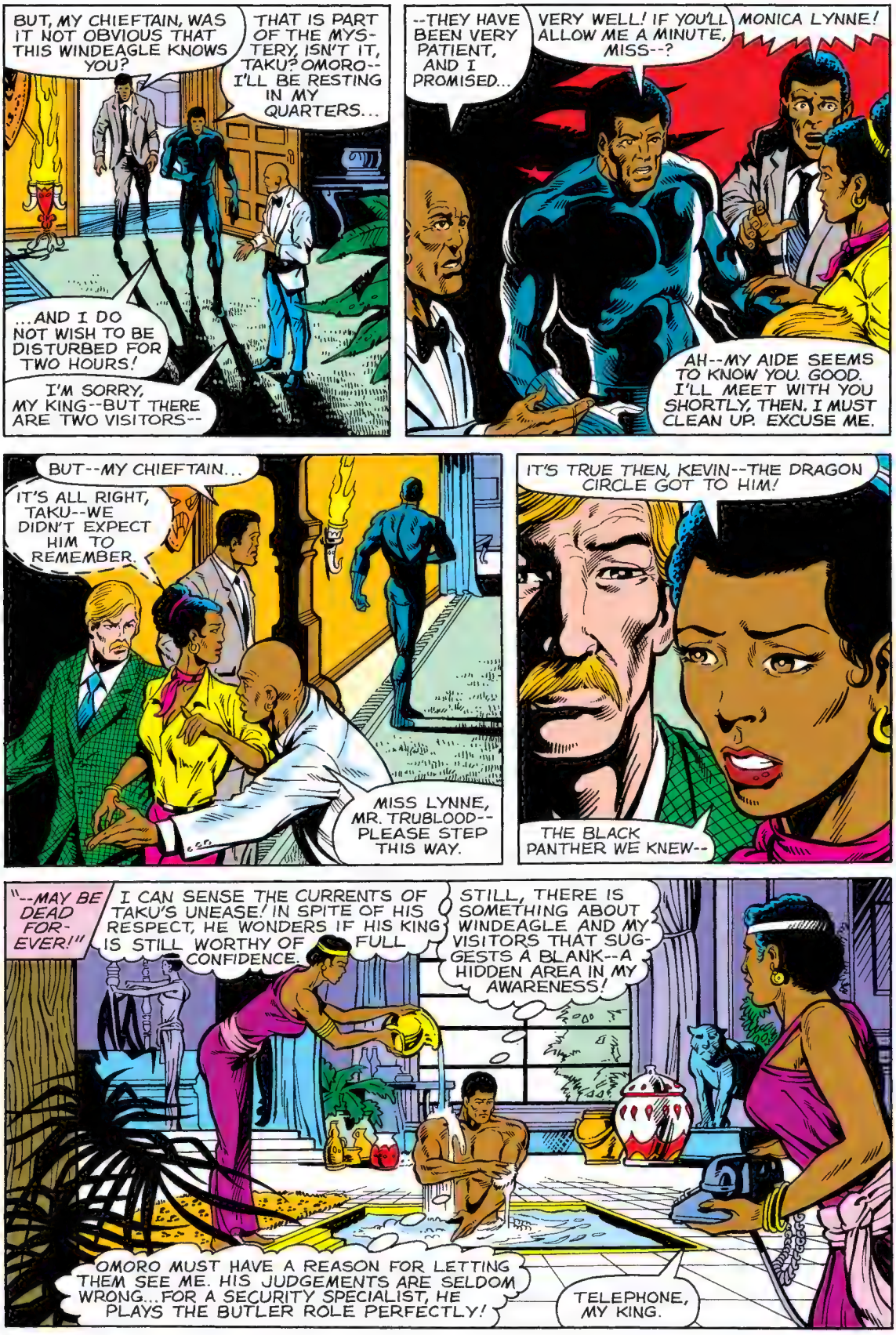

IT TOOK THREE OF US TO LIFT THAT THRONE-- AN' HE'S CARRYIN' IT LIKE IT WAS STYRO-FOAM!
THE MOVERS ARE SO AWED BY THE MESSAGE IN T'CHALLA'S ACTION THAT THEY DON'T NOTICE...

...THE SUBTLER COMMUNICATION THE PANTHER-KING HAS FLASHED TO HIS AIDES--
HEY--NOW THEY'RE PULLING GUNS! TAKE OFF!
BUT TAKU AND N'GASI ARE ALERT TO IMMINENT...

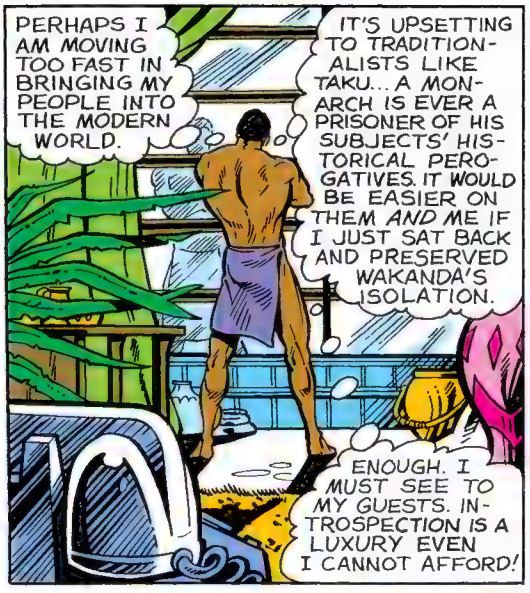
... ATTACK!
GREETINGS, PANTHER! YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO RETURN TO THIS COUNTRY--THUS YOU HAVE CONDEMNED YOURSELF TO DIE!
BLAM
BLAM
KRAK
YOU SOUND TOO CONFIDENT FOR ONE WHO HAS JUST LOST THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE!
WHUMP
AND YOU MAY BELIEVE...

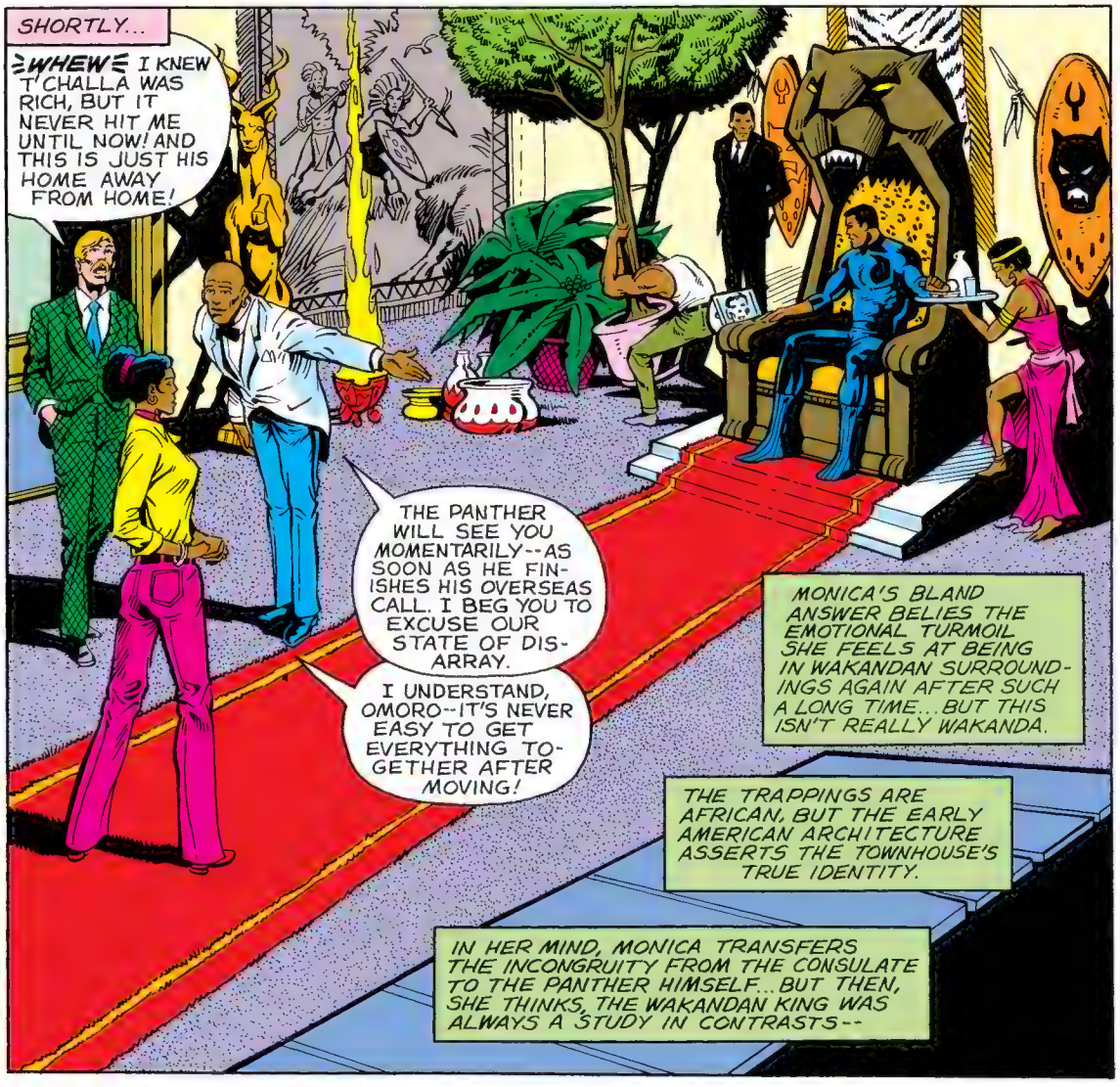

...IT'S THE ONLY ADVANTAGE YOU SHALL BE ALLOWED!
PREPARE TO DEFEND YOURSELF, WARRIOR!
I'M NOT IMPRESSED BY YOUR ROYAL TALK, PANTHER--
--OR MAYBE YOU DON'T REMEMBER WINDEAGLE?! TOO BAD-- I'VE COME A LONG WAY TO KILL YOU!
THE MONARCH HAS ISSUED HIS WARNING--NO REASON FOR FURTHER DISCOURSE...
...HE WONDERS AT THE NAME--WINDEAGLE! A FITTING APPELLATION FOR ONE WHO CAN PLY THE AIR... BUT THERE IS MORE TO COMBAT THAN THE COMMAND OF AN ENVIRONMENT.
A WARRIOR MUST HAVE TOTAL CONTROL OF HIMSELF--
--AS IT WOULD APPEAR THAT WINDEAGLE HAS NOT!
HURRY WITH THE SNARE, N'GASI.

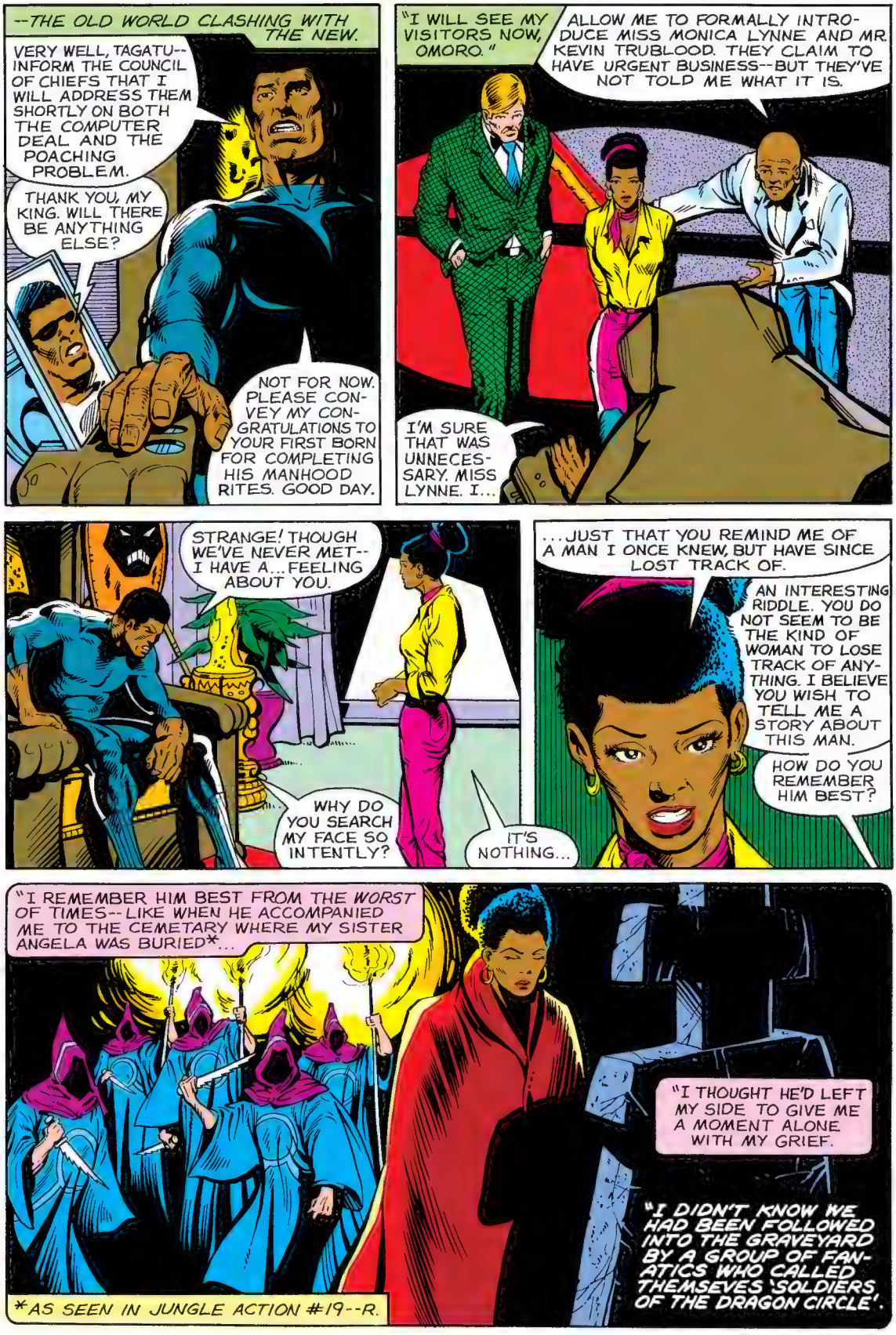

SO YOU ANTICIPATED MY ATTACK...NO MATTER.
IT'S ONLY PROOF THAT THE REVEREND WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOUR INTENTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES.
I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT... NOR DO I KNOW YOUR REVEREND!
BUT PERHAPS YOUR HIGHLY EMOTIONAL STATE IS AFFECTING YOUR ABILITY TO ARTICULATE.
YOU'RE TRYING TO CONFUSE ME--TO RAISE DOUBTS IN MY MIND!
IT WON'T WORK!
T'CHALLA MERELY WAITS...
...AND THROUGH THE HAZE OF BLURRING VISION, WINDEAGLE ATTACKS AGAIN!
SPANG
THUS FALL THE UNWARY IN THE PANTHER'S DOMAIN!
GOOD WORK, TAKU. THERE IS A MYSTERY HERE!
WHO IS MY ASSAILANT-- AND WHY WAS HE SENT ON A MISSION FOR WHICH HE WAS SO UNSUITED?
THEN... YOU DO NOT KNOW?

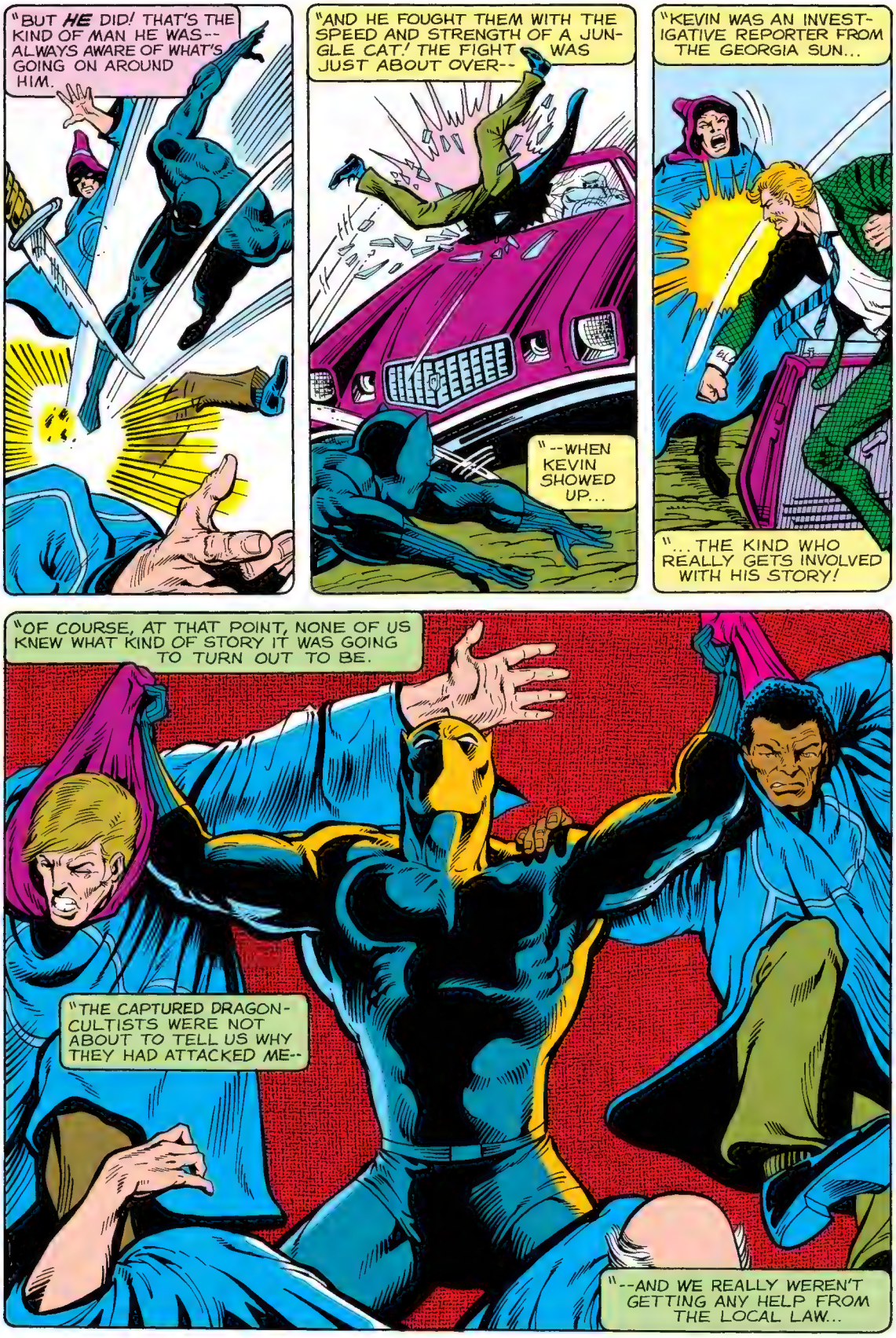

BUT, MY CHIEFTAIN, WAS IT NOT OBVIOUS THAT THIS WINDEAGLE KNOWS YOU?
THAT IS PART OF THE MYSTERY, ISN'T IT, TAKU? OMORO--I'LL BE RESTING IN MY QUARTERS...
...AND I DO NOT WISH TO BE DISTURBED FOR TWO HOURS!
I'M SORRY, MY KING--BUT THERE ARE TWO VISITORS--
--THEY HAVE BEEN VERY PATIENT, AND I PROMISED...
VERY WELL! IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME A MINUTE, MISS--?
MONICA LYNNE!
AH--MY AIDE SEEMS TO KNOW YOU. GOOD. I'LL MEET WITH YOU SHORTLY, THEN. I MUST CLEAN UP. EXCUSE ME.
BUT--MY CHIEFTAIN...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, TAKU--WE DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO REMEMBER.
MISS LYNNE, MR. TRUBLOOD--PLEASE STEP THIS WAY.
IT'S TRUE THEN, KEVIN--THE DRAGON CIRCLE GOT TO HIM!
THE BLACK PANTHER WE KNEW--
"--MAY BE DEAD FOR-EVER!"
I CAN SENSE THE CURRENTS OF TAKU'S UNEASE! IN SPITE OF HIS RESPECT, HE WONDERS IF HIS KING IS STILL WORTHY OF FULL CONFIDENCE.
STILL, THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT WINDEAGLE AND MY VISITORS THAT SUGGESTS A BLANK--A HIDDEN AREA IN MY AWARENESS!
OMORO MUST HAVE A REASON FOR LETTING THEM SEE ME. HIS JUDGEMENTS ARE SELDOM WRONG...FOR A SECURITY SPECIALIST, HE PLAYS THE BUTLER ROLE PERFECTLY!
TELEPHONE, MY KING.

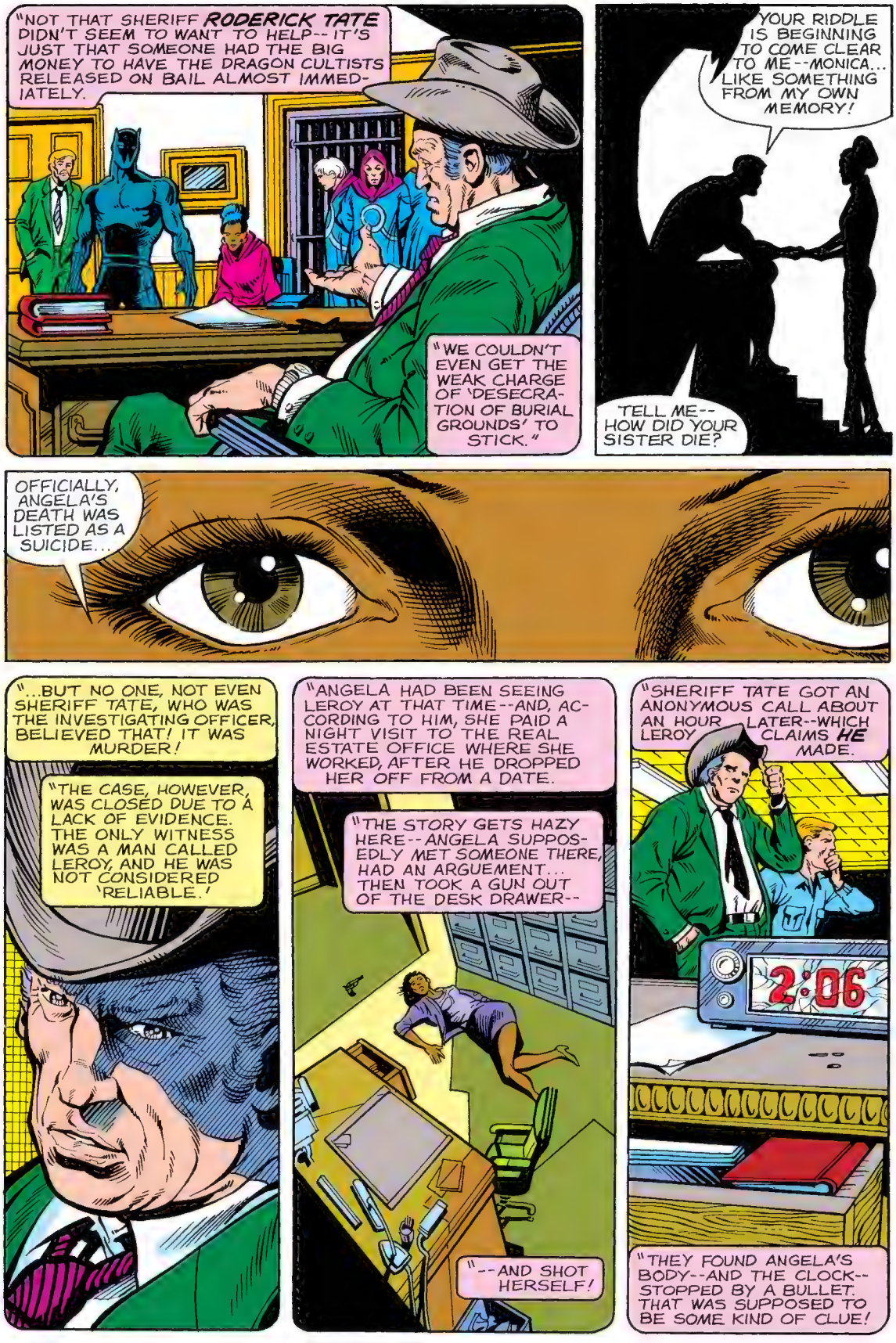
HELLO, MR. PRESIDENT... YES, WAKANDA IS INTERESTED IN SPONSORSHIP FOR ADMISSION TO THE U.N., BUT OUR INDEPENDENCE MUST BE--!
NO, I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT COMING TO CAMP DAVID. YES, SIR... I'VE *MET* AMBASSADOR YOUNG.
THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT-- I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH YOU AND SECRETARY VANCE. GOODBYE.

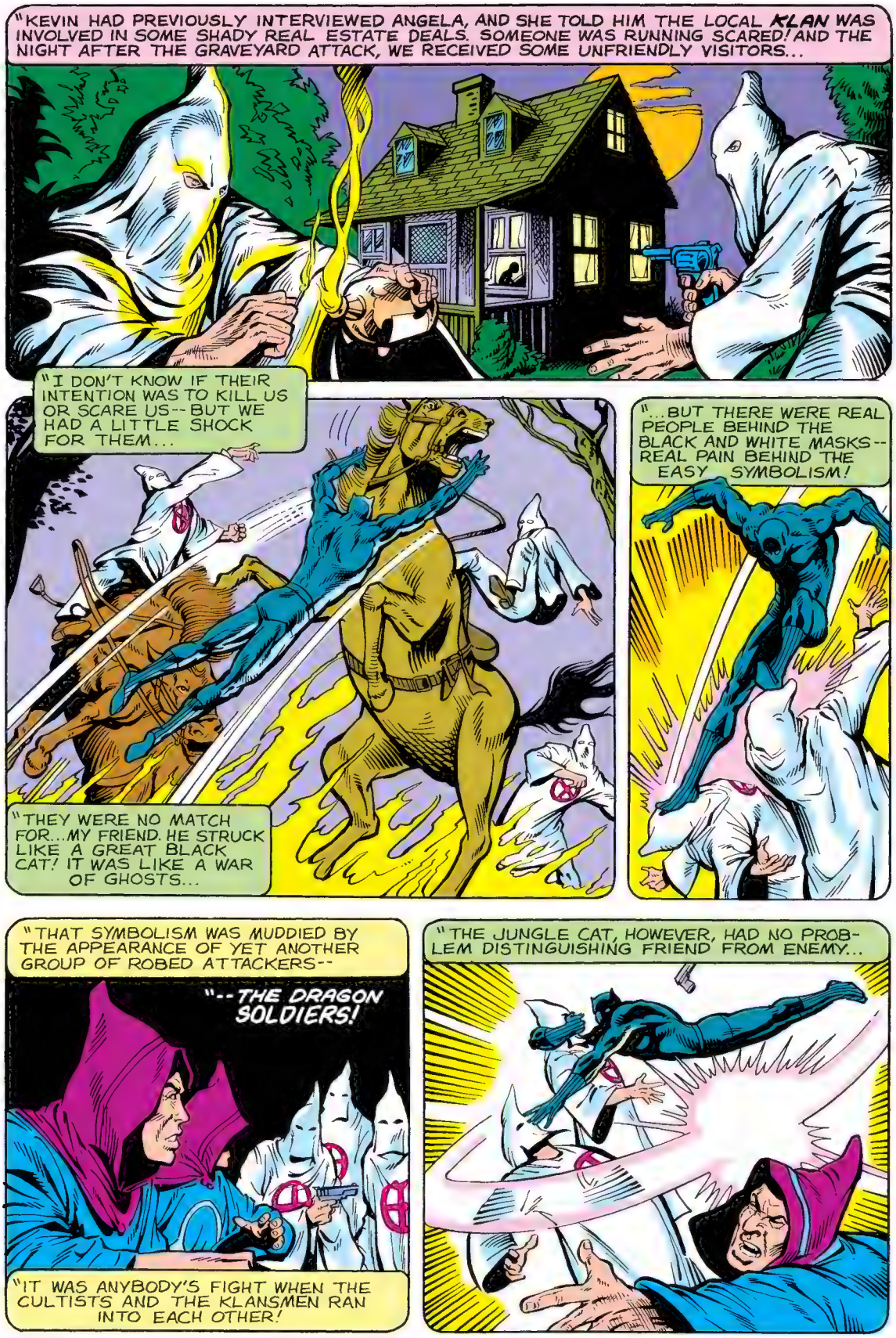

PERHAPS I AM MOVING TOO FAST IN BRINGING MY PEOPLE INTO THE MODERN WORLD.
IT'S UPSETTING TO TRADITIONALISTS LIKE TAKU... A MONARCH IS EVER A PRISONER OF HIS SUBJECTS' HISTORICAL PEROGATIVES. IT WOULD BE EASIER ON THEM *AND* ME IF I JUST SAT BACK AND PRESERVED WAKANDA'S ISOLATION.
ENOUGH. I MUST SEE TO MY GUESTS. INTROSPECTION IS A LUXURY EVEN I CANNOT AFFORD!

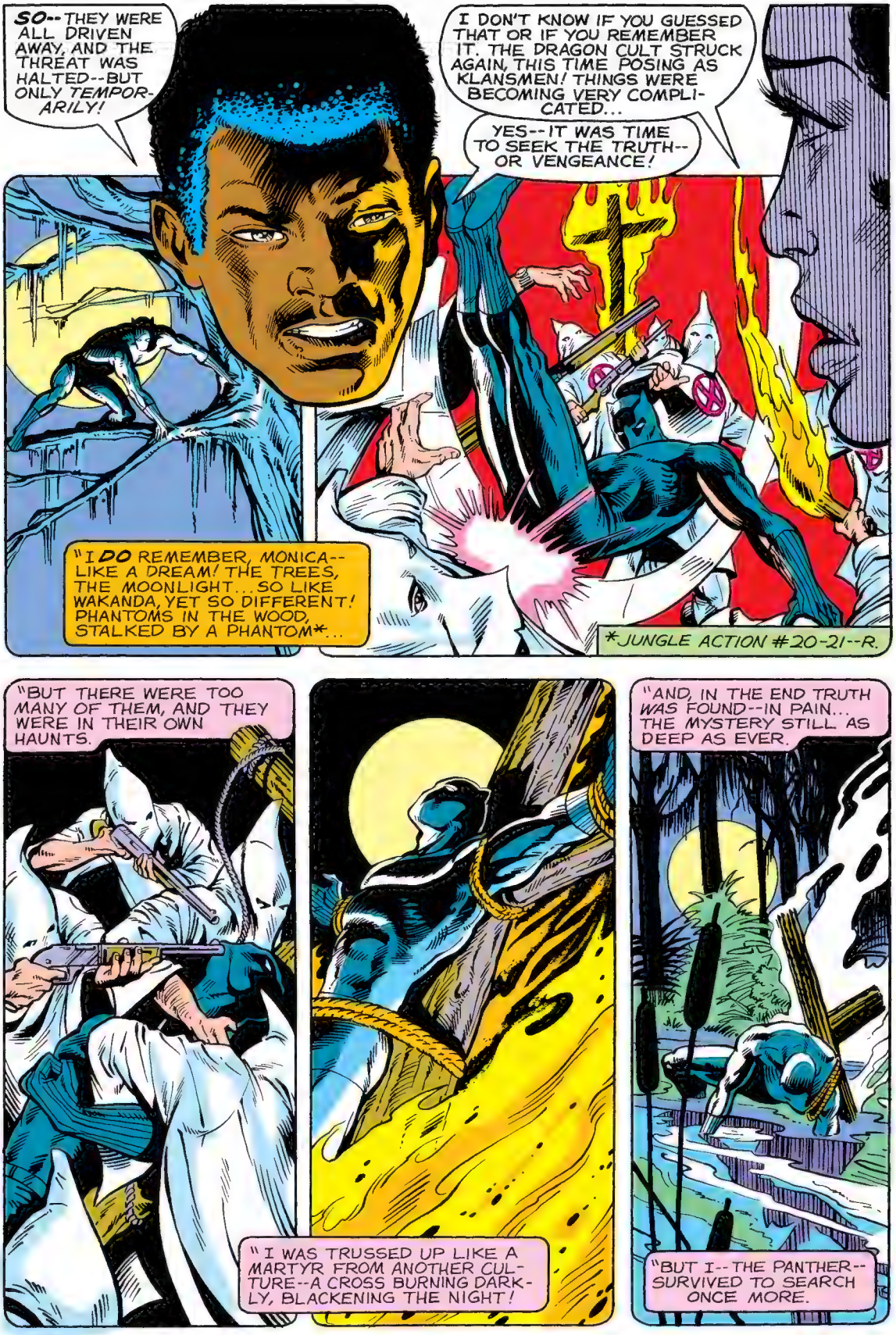

SHORTLY...
WHEW! I KNEW T'CHALLA WAS RICH, BUT IT NEVER HIT ME UNTIL NOW! AND THIS IS JUST HIS HOME AWAY FROM HOME!
THE PANTHER WILL SEE YOU MOMENTARILY--AS SOON AS HE FINISHES HIS OVERSEAS CALL. I BEG YOU TO EXCUSE OUR STATE OF DISARRAY.
I UNDERSTAND, OMORO--IT'S NEVER EASY TO GET EVERYTHING TOGETHER AFTER MOVING!
MONICA'S BLAND ANSWER BELIES THE EMOTIONAL TURMOIL SHE FEELS AT BEING IN WAKANDAN SURROUNDINGS AGAIN AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME... BUT THIS ISN'T REALLY WAKANDA.
THE TRAPPINGS ARE AFRICAN, BUT THE EARLY AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE ASSERTS THE TOWNHOUSE'S TRUE IDENTITY.
IN HER MIND, MONICA TRANSFERS THE INCONGRUITY FROM THE CONSULATE TO THE PANTHER HIMSELF... BUT THEN, SHE THINKS, THE WAKANDAN KING WAS ALWAYS A STUDY IN CONTRASTS--

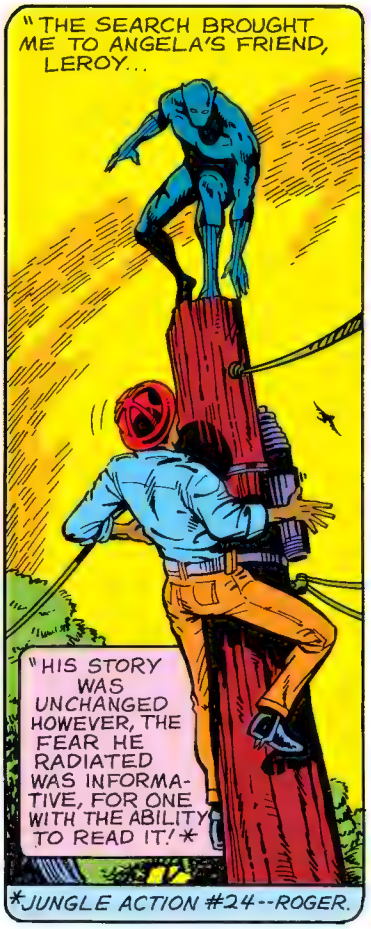

--THE OLD WORLD CLASHING WITH THE NEW.
VERY WELL, TAGATU--INFORM THE COUNCIL OF CHIEFS THAT I WILL ADDRESS THEM SHORTLY ON BOTH THE COMPUTER DEAL AND THE POACHING PROBLEM.
THANK YOU, MY KING. WILL THERE BE ANYTHING ELSE?
NOT FOR NOW. PLEASE CONVEY MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOUR FIRST BORN FOR COMPLETING HIS MANHOOD RITES. GOOD DAY.
"I WILL SEE MY VISITORS NOW, OMORO."
ALLOW ME TO FORMALLY INTRODUCE MISS MONICA LYNNE AND MR. KEVIN TRUBLOOD. THEY CLAIM TO HAVE URGENT BUSINESS--BUT THEY'VE NOT TOLD ME WHAT IT IS.
I'M SURE THAT WAS UNNECESSARY. MISS LYNNE. I...
STRANGE! THOUGH WE'VE NEVER MET--I HAVE A...FEELING ABOUT YOU.
WHY DO YOU SEARCH MY FACE SO INTENTLY?
IT'S NOTHING...
...JUST THAT YOU REMIND ME OF A MAN I ONCE KNEW, BUT HAVE SINCE LOST TRACK OF.
AN INTERESTING RIDDLE. YOU DO NOT SEEM TO BE THE KIND OF WOMAN TO LOSE TRACK OF ANYTHING. I BELIEVE YOU WISH TO TELL ME A STORY ABOUT THIS MAN.
HOW DO YOU REMEMBER HIM BEST?
"I REMEMBER HIM BEST FROM THE WORST OF TIMES--LIKE WHEN HE ACCOMPANIED ME TO THE CEMETARY WHERE MY SISTER ANGELA WAS BURIED*...
"I THOUGHT HE'D LEFT MY SIDE TO GIVE ME A MOMENT ALONE WITH MY GRIEF.
"I DIDN'T KNOW WE HAD BEEN FOLLOWED INTO THE GRAVEYARD BY A GROUP OF FANATICS WHO CALLED THEMSEVES 'SOLDIERS OF THE DRAGON CIRCLE'.
*AS SEEN IN JUNGLE ACTION #19--R.

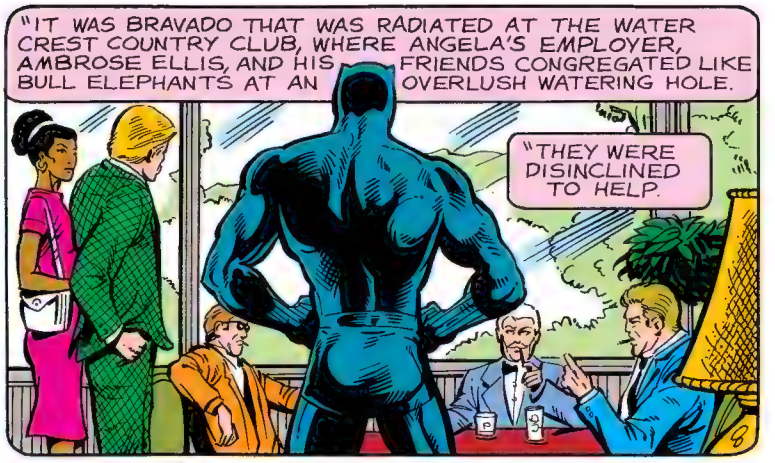

"BUT HE DID! THAT'S THE KIND OF MAN HE WAS-- ALWAYS AWARE OF WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HIM.
"AND HE FOUGHT THEM WITH THE SPEED AND STRENGTH OF A JUNGLE CAT! THE FIGHT WAS JUST ABOUT OVER--
"--WHEN KEVIN SHOWED UP...
"KEVIN WAS AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER FROM THE GEORGIA SUN...
"...THE KIND WHO REALLY GETS INVOLVED WITH HIS STORY!
"OF COURSE, AT THAT POINT, NONE OF US KNEW WHAT KIND OF STORY IT WAS GOING TO TURN OUT TO BE.
"THE CAPTURED DRAGON-CULTISTS WERE NOT ABOUT TO TELL US WHY THEY HAD ATTACKED ME--
"--AND WE REALLY WEREN'T GETTING ANY HELP FROM THE LOCAL LAW...


"NOT THAT SHERIFF RODERICK TATE DIDN'T SEEM TO WANT TO HELP-- IT'S JUST THAT SOMEONE HAD THE BIG MONEY TO HAVE THE DRAGON CULTISTS RELEASED ON BAIL ALMOST IMMEDIATELY.
"WE COULDN'T EVEN GET THE WEAK CHARGE OF 'DESECRATION OF BURIAL GROUNDS' TO STICK."
YOUR RIDDLE IS BEGINNING TO COME CLEAR TO ME--MONICA... LIKE SOMETHING FROM MY OWN MEMORY!
TELL ME-- HOW DID YOUR SISTER DIE?
OFFICIALLY, ANGELA'S DEATH WAS LISTED AS A SUICIDE...
"...BUT NO ONE, NOT EVEN SHERIFF TATE, WHO WAS THE INVESTIGATING OFFICER, BELIEVED THAT! IT WAS MURDER!
"THE CASE, HOWEVER, WAS CLOSED DUE TO A LACK OF EVIDENCE. THE ONLY WITNESS WAS A MAN CALLED LEROY, AND HE WAS NOT CONSIDERED 'RELIABLE.'
"ANGELA HAD BEEN SEEING LEROY AT THAT TIME--AND, ACCORDING TO HIM, SHE PAID A NIGHT VISIT TO THE REAL ESTATE OFFICE WHERE SHE WORKED, AFTER HE DROPPED HER OFF FROM A DATE.
"THE STORY GETS HAZY HERE--ANGELA SUPPOSEDLY MET SOMEONE THERE, HAD AN ARGUEMENT... THEN TOOK A GUN OUT OF THE DESK DRAWER--
"--AND SHOT HERSELF!
"SHERIFF TATE GOT AN ANONYMOUS CALL ABOUT AN HOUR LATER--WHICH LEROY CLAIMS HE MADE.
2:06
"THEY FOUND ANGELA'S BODY--AND THE CLOCK-- STOPPED BY A BULLET. THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KIND OF CLUE!


"KEVIN HAD PREVIOUSLY INTERVIEWED ANGELA, AND SHE TOLD HIM THE LOCAL KLAN WAS INVOLVED IN SOME SHADY REAL ESTATE DEALS. SOMEONE WAS RUNNING SCARED! AND THE NIGHT AFTER THE GRAVEYARD ATTACK, WE RECEIVED SOME UNFRIENDLY VISITORS...
"I DON'T KNOW IF THEIR INTENTION WAS TO KILL US OR SCARE US--BUT WE HAD A LITTLE SHOCK FOR THEM...
"THEY WERE NO MATCH FOR...MY FRIEND. HE STRUCK LIKE A GREAT BLACK CAT! IT WAS LIKE A WAR OF GHOSTS...
"...BUT THERE WERE REAL PEOPLE BEHIND THE BLACK AND WHITE MASKS--REAL PAIN BEHIND THE EASY SYMBOLISM!
"THAT SYMBOLISM WAS MUDDIED BY THE APPEARANCE OF YET ANOTHER GROUP OF ROBED ATTACKERS--
"--THE DRAGON SOLDIERS!
"IT WAS ANYBODY'S FIGHT WHEN THE CULTISTS AND THE KLANSMEN RAN INTO EACH OTHER!
"THE JUNGLE CAT, HOWEVER, HAD NO PROBLEM DISTINGUISHING FRIEND FROM ENEMY...


SO--THEY WERE ALL DRIVEN AWAY, AND THE THREAT WAS HALTED--BUT ONLY TEMPORARILY!
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU GUESSED THAT OR IF YOU REMEMBER IT. THE DRAGON CULT STRUCK AGAIN, THIS TIME POSING AS KLANSMEN! THINGS WERE BECOMING VERY COMPLICATED...
YES--IT WAS TIME TO SEEK THE TRUTH--OR VENGEANCE!
"I DO REMEMBER, MONICA--LIKE A DREAM! THE TREES, THE MOONLIGHT...SO LIKE WAKANDA, YET SO DIFFERENT! PHANTOMS IN THE WOOD, STALKED BY A PHANTOM*...
*JUNGLE ACTION #20-21--R.
"BUT THERE WERE TOO MANY OF THEM, AND THEY WERE IN THEIR OWN HAUNTS.
"I WAS TRUSSED UP LIKE A MARTYR FROM ANOTHER CULTURE--A CROSS BURNING DARKLY, BLACKENING THE NIGHT!
"AND, IN THE END TRUTH WAS FOUND--IN PAIN... THE MYSTERY STILL AS DEEP AS EVER.
"BUT I--THE PANTHER--SURVIVED TO SEARCH ONCE MORE.

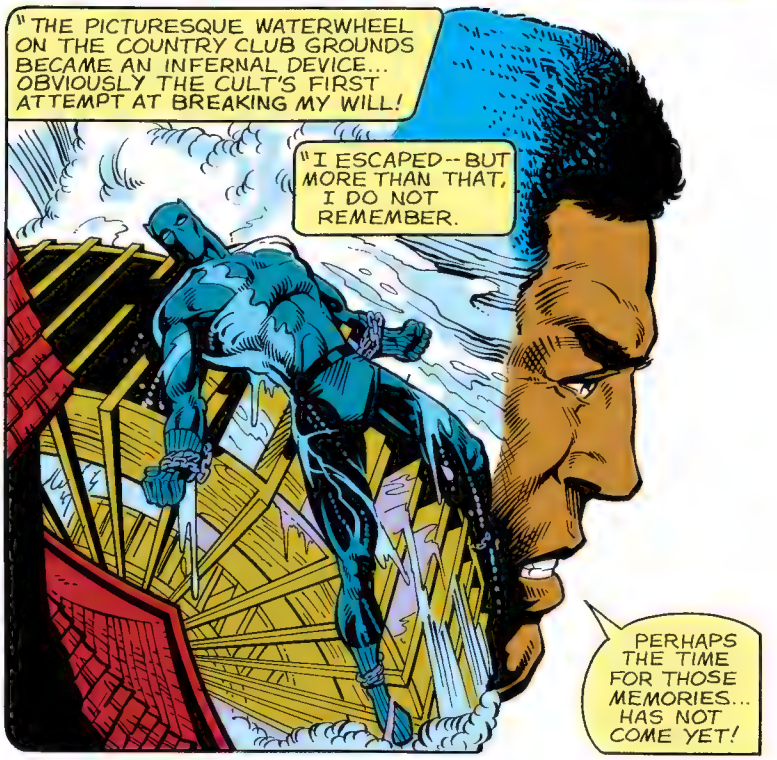

"THE SEARCH BROUGHT ME TO ANGELA'S FRIEND, LEROY...
"HIS STORY WAS UNCHANGED HOWEVER, THE FEAR HE RADIATED WAS INFORMATIVE, FOR ONE WITH THE ABILITY TO READ IT!*
*JUNGLE ACTION #24--ROGER.


"IT WAS BRAVADO THAT WAS RADIATED AT THE WATER CREST COUNTRY CLUB, WHERE ANGELA'S EMPLOYER, AMBROSE ELLIS, AND HIS FRIENDS CONGREGATED LIKE BULL ELEPHANTS AT AN OVERLUSH WATERING HOLE.
"THEY WERE DISINCLINED TO HELP.

"NEVERTHELESS, WE WERE CLOSING IN ON SOMETHING--ENOUGH TO PROVOKE A REACTION...

"...WHICH CAME IN THE FORM OF WINDEAGLE!

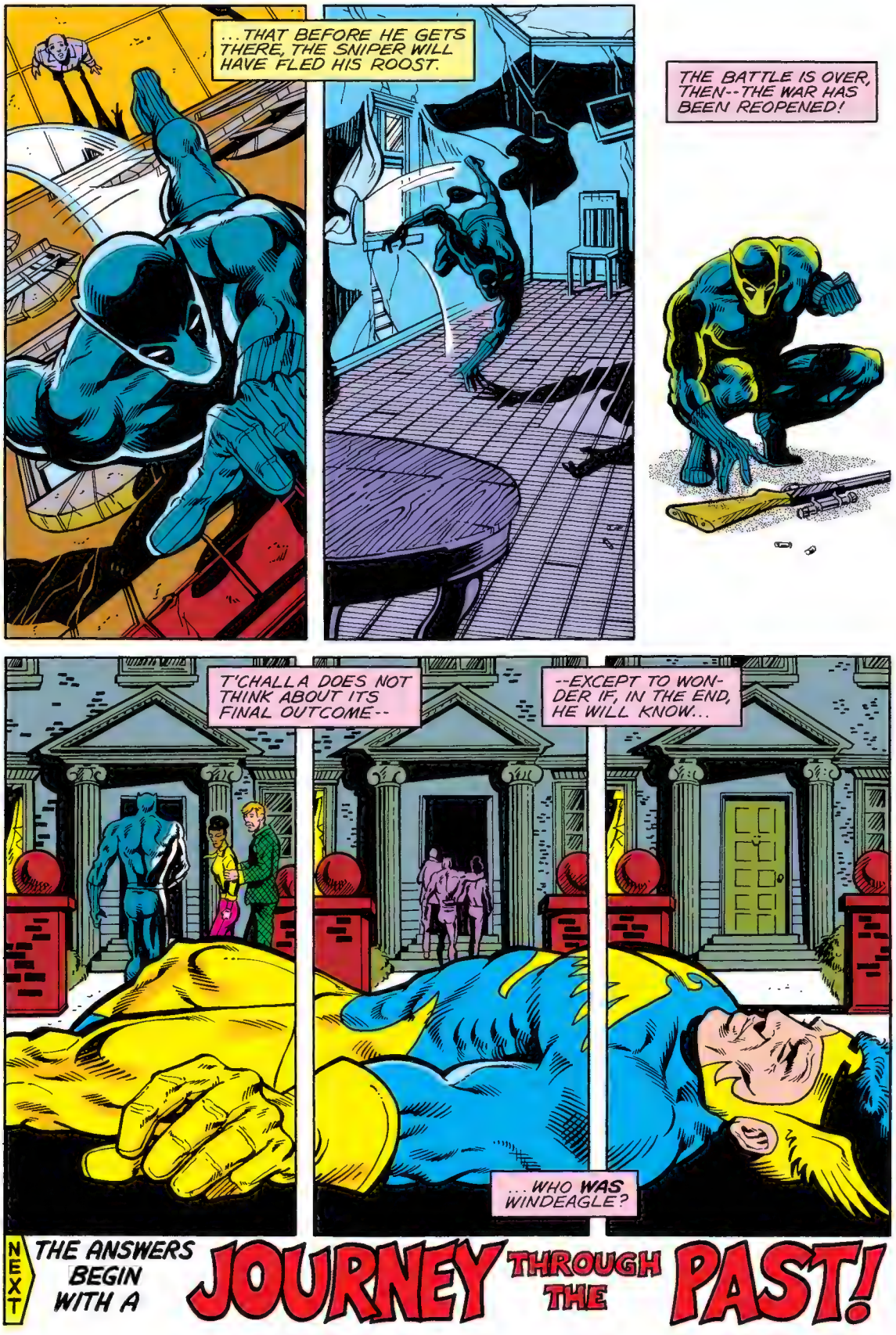
"WE BATTLED, AND HE DEFEATED ME--BY A TRICK MORE THE DRAGON CULT'S DOING THAN HIS OWN! THOUGH IT WAS CLEAR HE WAS THEIR LACKEY, WINDEAGLE SHOWED SIGNS OF DOUBT ABOUT HIS MISSION!

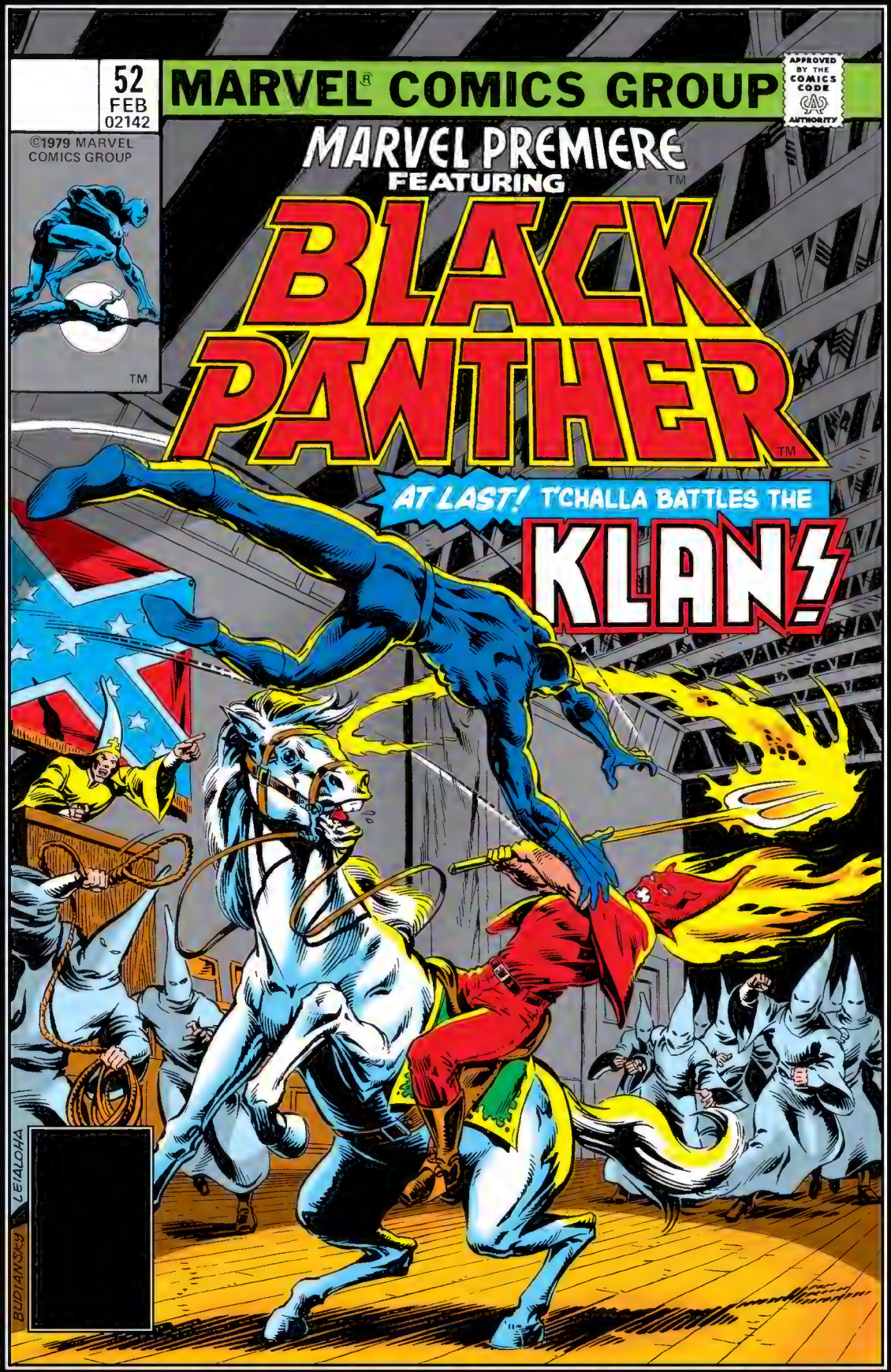

"THE PICTURESQUE WATERWHEEL ON THE COUNTRY CLUB GROUNDS BECAME AN INFERNAL DEVICE... OBVIOUSLY THE CULT'S FIRST ATTEMPT AT BREAKING MY WILL!
"I ESCAPED--BUT MORE THAN THAT, I DO NOT REMEMBER.
PERHAPS THE TIME FOR THOSE MEMORIES... HAS NOT COME YET!

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO REMEMBER EVERYTHING AT ONCE!
THE POINT IS THAT THE MYSTERY STILL HAS TO BE SOLVED--THE THREAT OF THE DRAGON CULT IS STILL VERY REAL!
KEVIN IS RIGHT, T'CHALLA--THAT'S WHY WE CAME...
BEWARE, TREACHEROUS SCUM--WINDEAGLE RETURNS TO EXACT HIS DUE!
THE PRISONER HAS ESCAPED! TAKE COVER, MY CHIEFTAIN!
KRAK
COMMAND DOES NOT PASS TO YOU IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, TAKU! THE BLACK PANTHER IS STILL CAPABLE OF FIGHTING HIS OWN BATTLES!
MY FIGHT IS WITH THE COSTUMED DEVIL--NOT HIS LACKEYS!
MY KING--GAS!
SO--THAT MUST BE HOW WINDEAGLE ESCAPED!
AND, IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME...
...HIS FLYING GEAR IS VERY MUCH LIKE A PRODUCT OF WAKANDAN TECHNOLOGY! I PROVIDED THE SAME KIND OF EQUIPMENT TO THE FALCON!*
*CAPTAIN AMERICA #170--R.S.
SWOK
THAT COULD MEAN THAT THE DRAGON CULT HAS SOMEHOW INFILTRATED MY COUNTRY'S SCIENTIFIC ELITE!
SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS--HIS SPEED WAS SO GREAT THAT THE SPEAR MERELY SHATTERED!
THE ADVANTAGE IS YOURS IN THIS CONFINED SPACE, DEVIL! WE'LL DECIDE THE FINAL OUTCOME IN THE UNFETTERED SPACES OUTSIDE!
YOU FORGET, WINDEAGLE--IT WAS OUTSIDE THAT I DEFEATED YOU!

YOU NEVER DEFEATED ME, PANTHER-DEVIL!
THE REVEREND TOLD ME YOU WERE A LIAR--BUT NOW YOU DENY THE REALITY OF YOUR SENSES!
THE CAT-KING DOES NOT DEIGN TO REPLY--
--AS EVER, HE ESCHEWS VERBAL EXCHANGE IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATION AND CALCULATION.
THE ENEMY IS RASH, OVER CONFIDENT...
AH, THE IMPACT OF GOING THROUGH THE WINDOW HAS STUNNED YOU...
...OR IS IT ONLY A DECEITFUL RUSE?!
WINDEAGLE HAS DISCOVERED HIS MISTAKE... TOO LATE! THE PANTHER NOTES THAT THE SAME TACTIC HAS WORKED TWICE AGAINST THIS ADVERSARY!
CRUMP
SPAK
HE DOUBTS THAT IT WILL WORK--OR BE NEEDED--AGAIN!

T'CHALLA ALSO REFLECTS ON THE FACT THAT WINDEAGLE DID NOT USE THE GAS WEAPON ON HIM, THUS ENSURING VICTORY!
DOES HIS FLYING FOE INTEND TO GAIN HONOR BATTLING AN OPPONENT AT FULL STRENGTH?
OR IS IT A MENTAL FLAW, A COMPULSION TO FAIL? PERHAPS WINDEAGLE IS YET GNAWED BY DOUBT IN THE RIGHTNESS OF HIS MISSION?
IF SO, THE PANTHER REALIZES, THOSE WHO SENT HIM SURELY KNOW IT--
--AND ARE PREPARED FOR ANY HINT OF FALTERING ON THE PART OF THEIR PAWN!
KRAKOW
LORD! SOMEBODY SHOT THE GUY!
T'CHALLA HAS ALREADY SPOTTED THE GLINT OF SUNLIGHT OFF STEEL...
...AND IS HEADED FOR ITS SOURCE BEFORE THE VICTIM'S LIFELESS BODY EVEN STARTS ITS FLUTTER TO THE GROUND!
ANY OTHER MONARCH WOULD FEAR AN ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE-- THE PANTHER WISHES THE GUNMAN WOULD BE SO FOOLHARDY! HIS JUNGLE-BRED INSTINCTS MAKE HIM CERTAIN, HOWEVER...


...THAT BEFORE HE GETS THERE, THE SNIPER WILL HAVE FLED HIS ROOST.
THE BATTLE IS OVER, THEN--THE WAR HAS BEEN REOPENED!
T'CHALLA DOES NOT THINK ABOUT ITS FINAL OUTCOME--
--EXCEPT TO WONDER IF, IN THE END, HE WILL KNOW...
...WHO WAS WINDEAGLE?
NEXT
THE ANSWERS BEGIN WITH A
JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST!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AT LAST! T'CHALLA BATTLES THE
KLAN!
BUDIANSKY
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STORY ED HANNIGAN
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INKS GENE DAY
LETTERING DIANA ALBERS
COLORING BOB SHAREN
EDITING ROGER STERN
BOSS JIM SHOOTER
JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST
THE MAN ON THE SLAB WAS CALLED WINDEAGLE BY THOSE WHO GAVE HIM THE POWER TO RIDE THE AIR. NOW HE IS DEAD--
--AND THE BLACK PANTHER--KING OF THE WAKANDAS--IS CERTAIN HE KNOWS THE REASON WINDEAGLE WAS SLAIN, FOR IT WAS THE PANTHER THAT THE FLYING MAN WAS SENT TO ASSASSINATE! HIS FAILURE WAS PUNISHED WITH A GUNSHOT-SWIFT-DEATH!*
THERE ARE OTHER THINGS, HOWEVER, THAT THE BLACK PANTHER DOES NOT KNOW...
WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THIS YOUNG MAN, LIEUTENANT?
THE BOYS UPSTAIRS ARE RUNNING A MAKE ON HIM RIGHT NOW. IF HE'S GOT A CRIMINAL RECORD ANYWHERE IN THE FIFTY STATES, OUR COMPUTERS WILL FIND OUT!
LET'S GO. YOUR AIDE SEEMS TO BE BE GETTING EDGY, AND I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY...THIS ISN'T EXACTLY MY MY FAVORITE PLACE EITHER!
*LAST ISSUE--ROGER.

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WHY, TAKU--I HADN'T NOTICED. SURELY YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM A ROOMFUL OF CORPES?
THE DEAD CAN TELL US THINGS WE DON'T WANT TO HEAR--OR SO THE SHAMANS WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE!
CITY MORGUE
IN THIS COUNTRY IT'S CALLED "FORENSIC MEDICINE", AND ITS PRACTICIONERS CLAIM LESS THAN MAGICAL KNOWLEDGE!
OBVIOUSLY, YOU NEVER WATCHED "QUINCY"!
WE RAN HIS PRINTS THROUGH THE COMPUTER, AND GOT QUITE A LOAD--NOTHING UNUSUAL, THOUGH!
HEY, THE GUY FLIES--WHAT MORE D'YOU WANT?
HIS FLYING WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH APPARATUS STOLEN FROM MY COUNTRY--THAT MUCH IS CLEAR...
...I'M MORE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT WHAT GOES INTO THE MAKING OF A THRALL OF THE DRAGON CIRCLE!
I DOUBT IF THIS'LL TELL YOU. SEEMS LIKE EVERYBODY'S JOININ' CULTS THESE DAYS...
RT
LT
RUIZ, HECTOR SANTIAGO
ALIAS: WINDEAGLE
RI
LL
RL
LL
"...BUT HERE'S A PSYCHIATRIC REPORT: HECTOR SANTIAGO RUIZ, DOMINICAN EXTRACTION, ONLY SON OF POOR IMMIGRANTS...IN TROUBLE FROM THE START OF SCHOOL.
"SOUNDS LIKE A ZILLION OTHER NEW YORK KIDS.
"AFTER HE JOINED THE LOCAL STREET GANG, HE WAS BEYOND HELP. HIS TEACHERS, HIS PARENTS--NOBODY COULD HANDLE HIM.
"THE GANG WAS JUST BASIC TRAINING--SOON HE STRUCK OUT ON HIS OWN, BECOMING AN ARMED ROBBER...
"...AND A JUNKIE. PARDON MY CYNICISM, BUT THIS STORY'S SO TYPICAL!
"POLICE RECORDS DON'T EXACTLY GET INTO THE PERSONALITIES OF THEIR SUBJECTS. MAYBE THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM. ANYWAY, HECTOR WAS IN AND OUT OF CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS...

"...UNTIL HE FINALLY HIT THE BIG TIME WITH AN ADULT CHARGE OF ASSAULT. HE WENT TO PRISON, WHERE HE TURNED OUT TO BE A MODEL INMATE.

"HE STARTED SEEING VISITORS FROM A "STREET MISSION" CALLED THE *SPIRITUAL LIGHT SOCIETY.*

"ANYWAY, HECTOR FOUND SOMETHING IN THE *SLS,* AND FINALLY WAS PAROLLED INTO THEIR CUSTODY. WE NEVER HEARD FROM HIM AGAIN."

TWO YEARS LATER THE SOCIETY GOT INVOLVED IN A POLITICAL SCANDAL, AND THEY MOVED DOWN SOUTH.

I GUESS IT'S OBVIOUS THAT THE *SLS* AND THE CULT OF THE DRAGON CIRCLE ARE ONE AND THE SAME!

AND THAT'S ABOUT IT--WHEN WE GET A MAKE ON THE MURDER WEAPON, WE'LL CALL YOU AT YOUR CONSULATE!

THANK YOU, LIEUTENANT--WE APPRECIATE YOUR EFFICIENCY! GOOD DAY!

WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT, T'CHALLA?

NOT VERY MUCH, MONICA... BUT ENOUGH! THE SIZE OF WINDEAGLE'S WOUND INDICATES THAT THE RIFLE I FOUND WAS *NOT* THE MURDER WEAPON AT ALL.

WE COULD LEARN SO MUCH MORE IF THEY'D ALLOW US TO APPLY WAKANDAN CRIMINOLOGY TECHNIQUES--!

A PARALLEL MAY EXIST BETWEEN THIS KILLING AND YOUR SISTER'S MURDER!

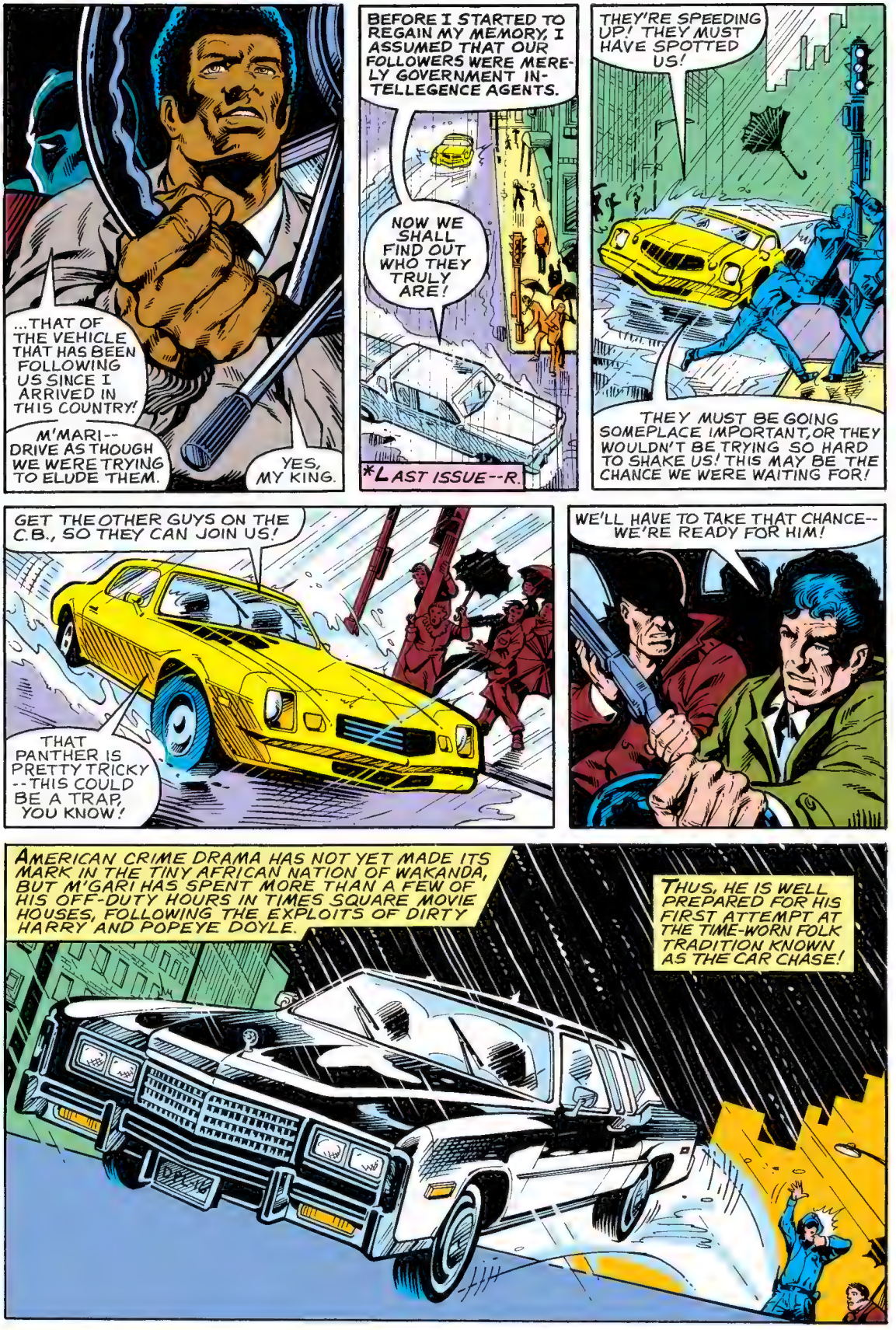
WHICH WOULD PROBABLY BE INADMISSIBLE IN OUR COURTS, TAKU.

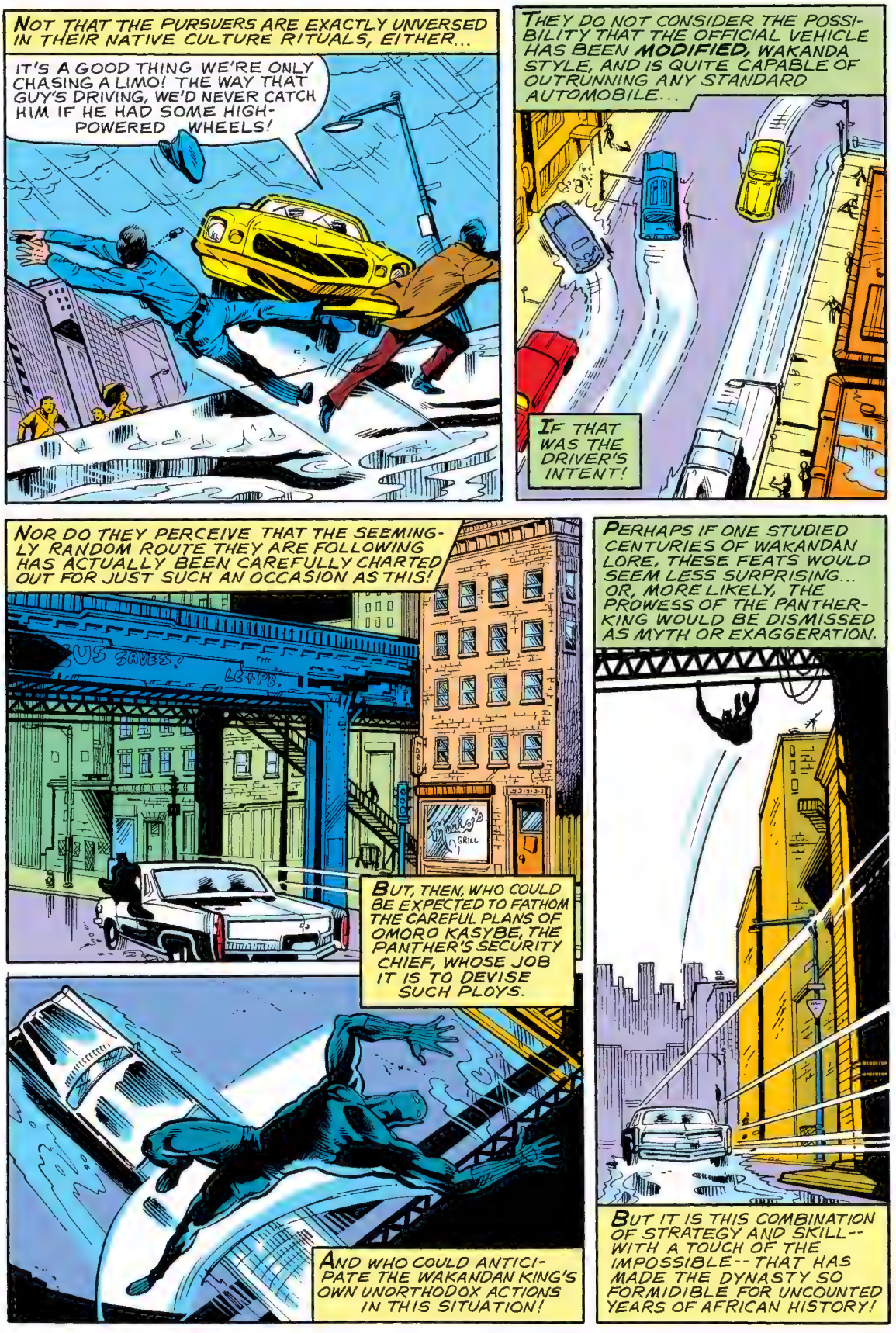
PRECK

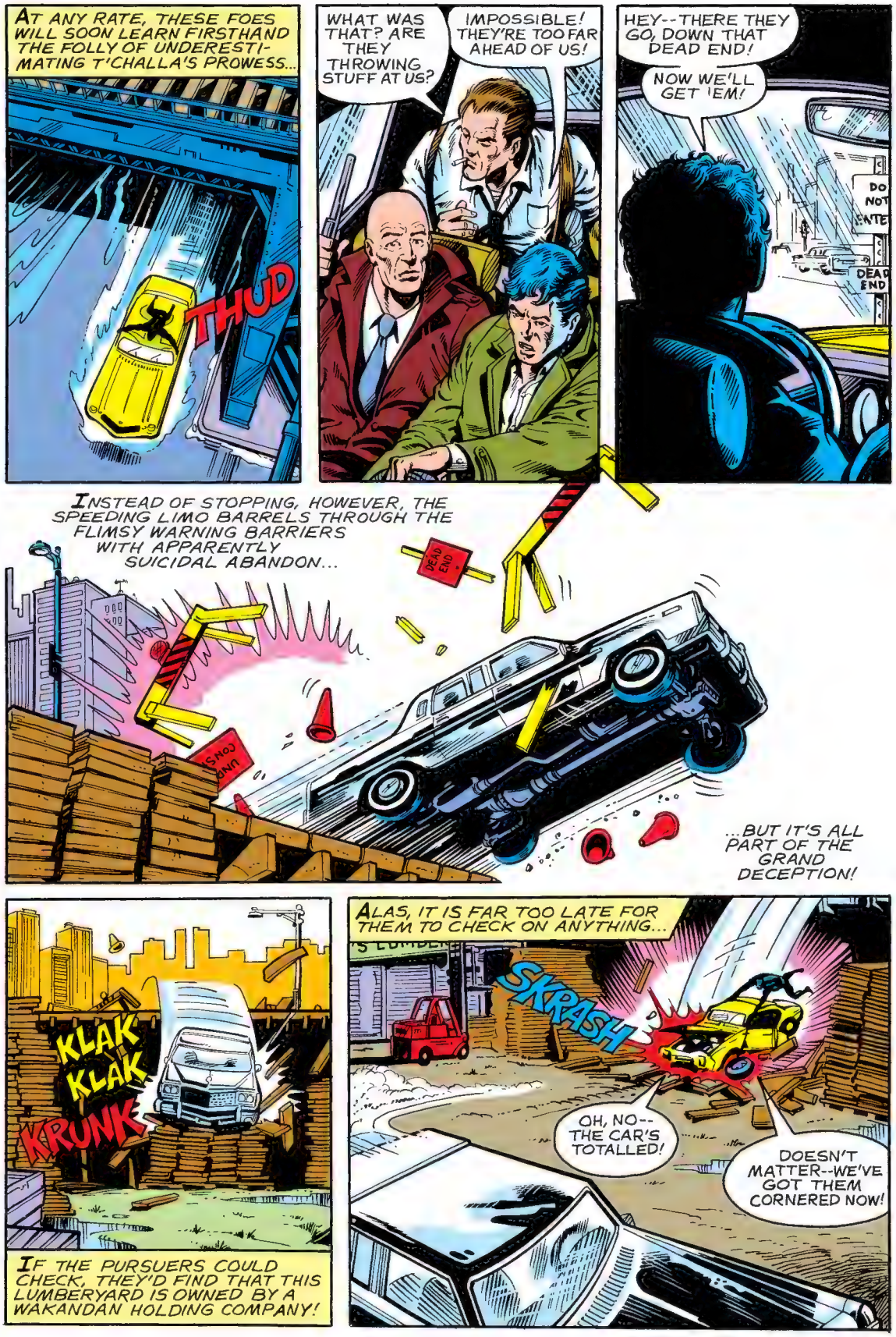
ANYWAY, I'VE A REPORTER'S HUNCH THAT THE PANTHER WILL WANT TO DO HIS OWN INVESTIGATING, INDEPENDENT OF THE POLICE!

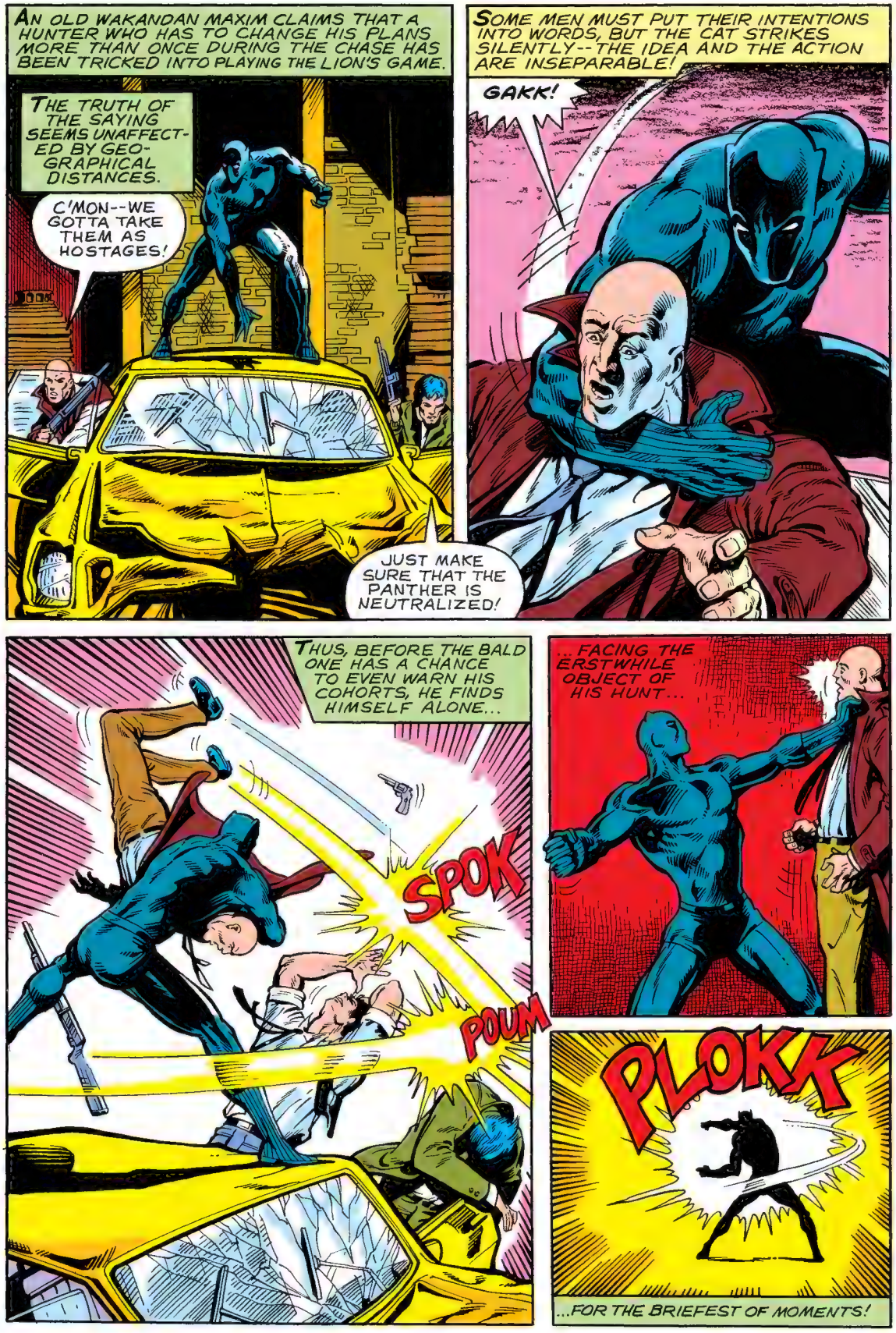
THAT GUESS REQUIRES NO SPECIAL INSTINCT, MR. TRUBLOOD. ANY CREATURE OF THE JUNGLE KNOWS THAT IT WOULD BE DISASTEROUS NOT TO BE AWARE OF ANY DANGERS THAT MIGHT EXIST WITHIN HIS TERRITORY.

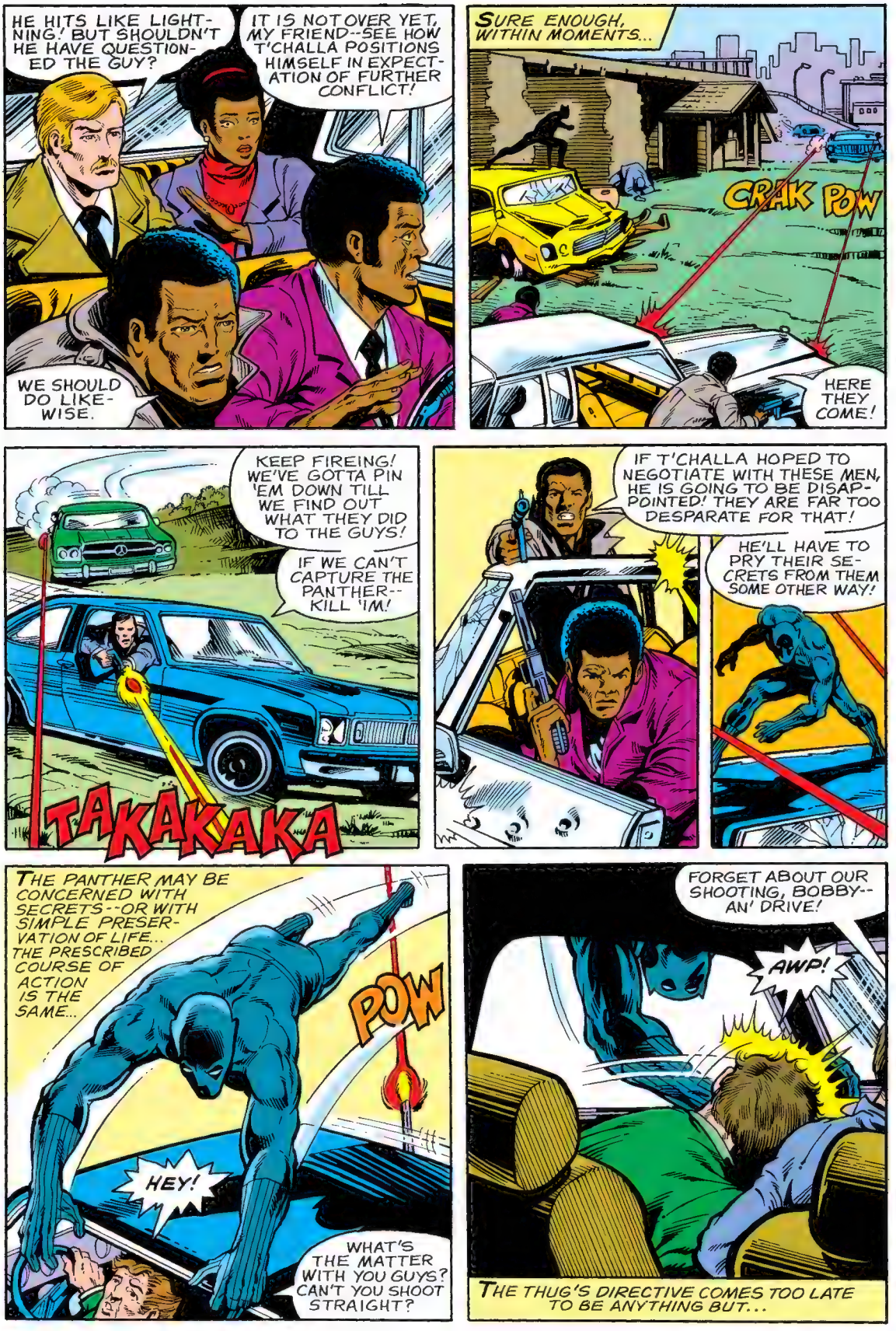
IN FACT, THERE'S ONE PUZZLE WE SHALL BE DEALING WITH IMMEDIATELY...

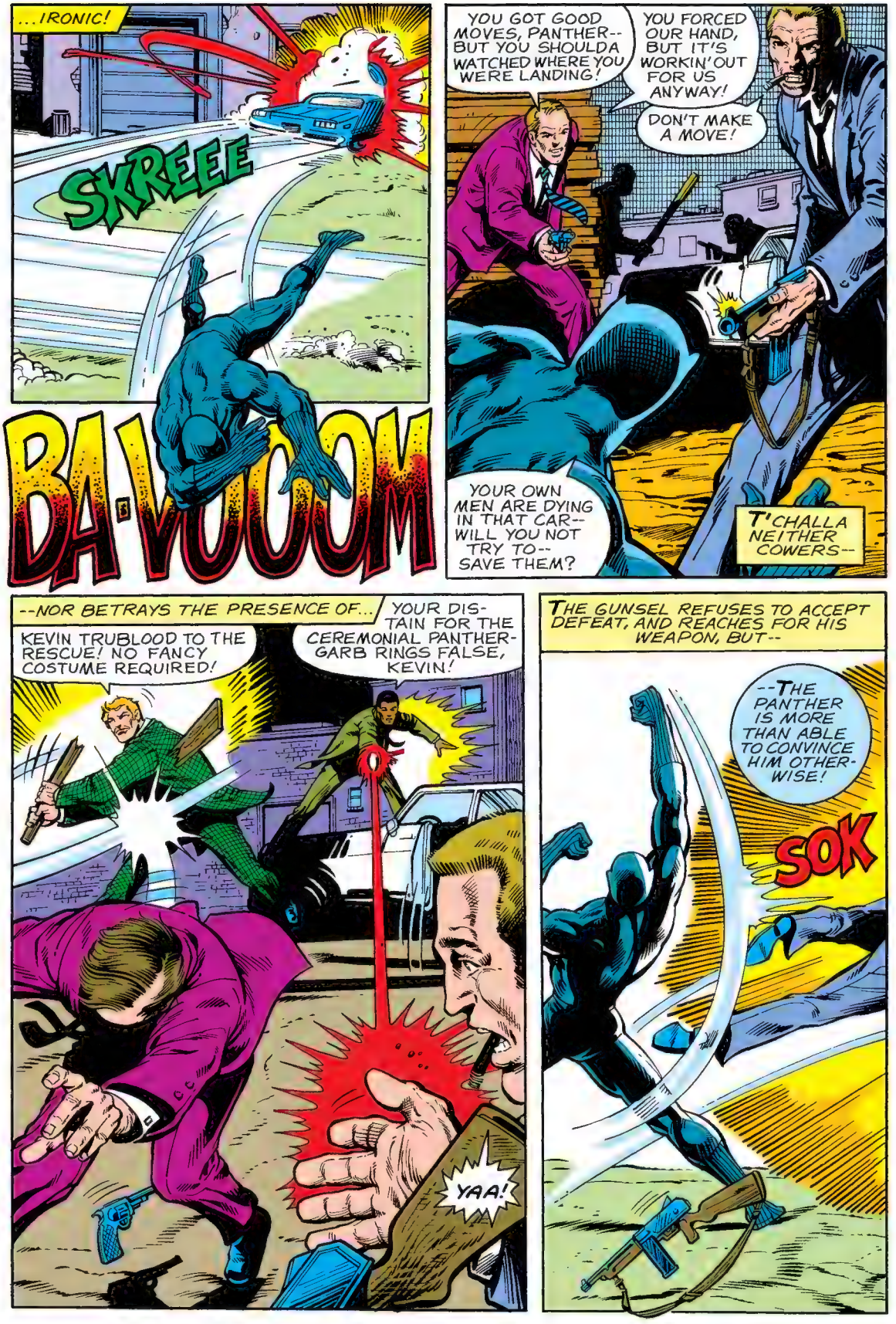

...THAT OF THE VEHICLE THAT HAS BEEN FOLLOWING US SINCE I ARRIVED IN THIS COUNTRY!
M'MARI--DRIVE AS THOUGH WE WERE TRYING TO ELUDE THEM.
YES, MY KING.
BEFORE I STARTED TO REGAIN MY MEMORY, I ASSUMED THAT OUR FOLLOWERS WERE MERELY GOVERNMENT INTELLEGENCE AGENTS.
NOW WE SHALL FIND OUT WHO THEY TRULY ARE!
*LAST ISSUE--R.
THEY'RE SPEEDING UP! THEY MUST HAVE SPOTTED US!
THEY MUST BE GOING SOMEPLACE IMPORTANT, OR THEY WOULDN'T BE TRYING SO HARD TO SHAKE US! THIS MAY BE THE CHANCE WE WERE WAITING FOR!
GET THE OTHER GUYS ON THE C.B., SO THEY CAN JOIN US!
THAT PANTHER IS PRETTY TRICKY--THIS COULD BE A TRAP, YOU KNOW!
WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE THAT CHANCE--WE'RE READY FOR HIM!
AMERICAN CRIME DRAMA HAS NOT YET MADE ITS MARK IN THE TINY AFRICAN NATION OF WAKANDA, BUT M'GARI HAS SPENT MORE THAN A FEW OF HIS OFF-DUTY HOURS IN TIMES SQUARE MOVIE HOUSES, FOLLOWING THE EXPLOITS OF DIRTY HARRY AND POPEYE DOYLE.
THUS, HE IS WELL PREPARED FOR HIS FIRST ATTEMPT AT THE TIME-WORN FOLK TRADITION KNOWN AS THE CAR CHASE!

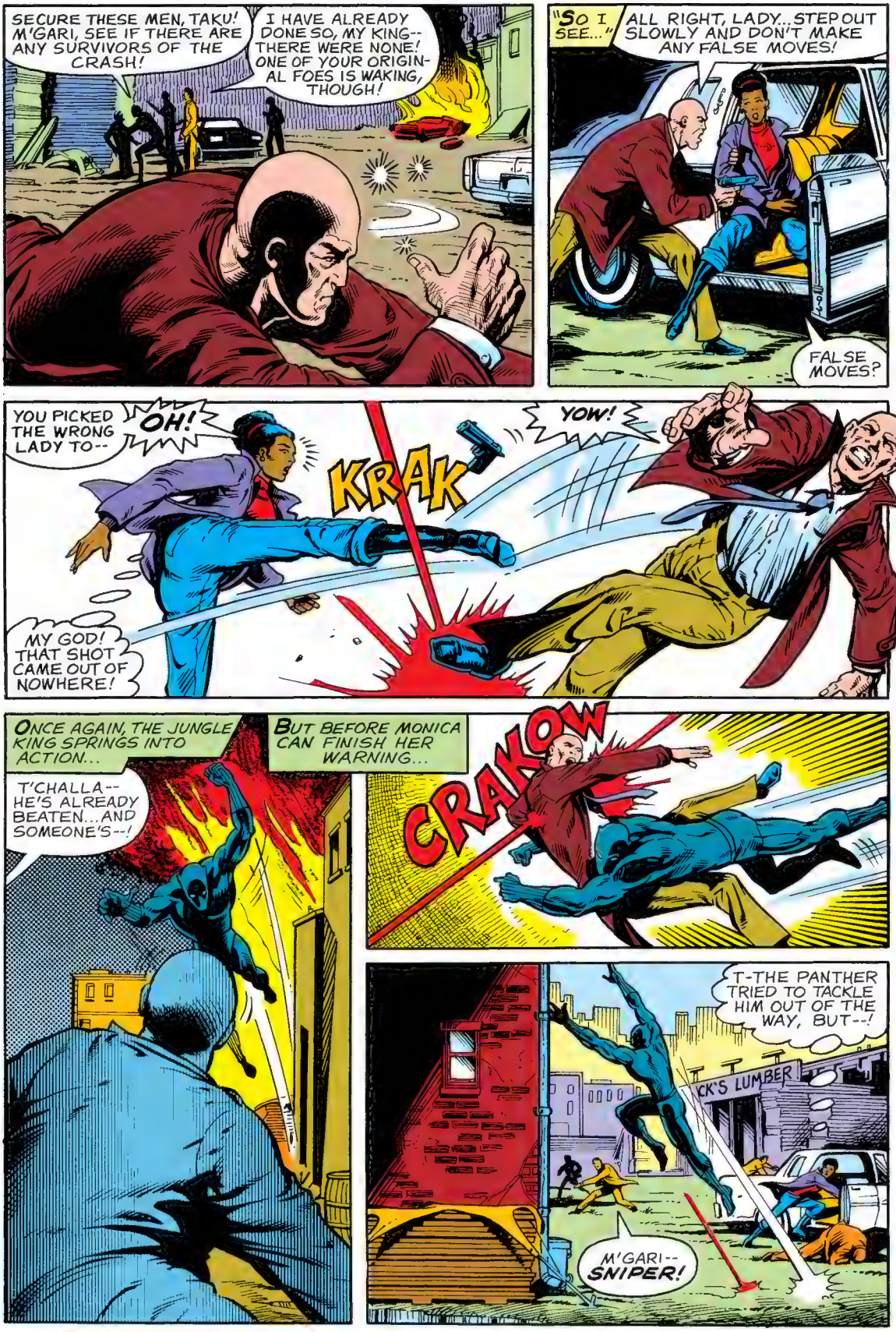

NOT THAT THE PURSUERS ARE EXACTLY UNVERSED IN THEIR NATIVE CULTURE RITUALS, EITHER...
IT'S A GOOD THING WE'RE ONLY CHASING A LIMO! THE WAY THAT GUY'S DRIVING, WE'D NEVER CATCH HIM IF HE HAD SOME HIGH-POWERED WHEELS!
THEY DO NOT CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE OFFICIAL VEHICLE HAS BEEN MODIFIED, WAKANDA STYLE, AND IS QUITE CAPABLE OF OUTRUNNING ANY STANDARD AUTOMOBILE...
IF THAT WAS THE DRIVER'S INTENT!
NOR DO THEY PERCEIVE THAT THE SEEMINGLY RANDOM ROUTE THEY ARE FOLLOWING HAS ACTUALLY BEEN CAREFULLY CHARTED OUT FOR JUST SUCH AN OCCASION AS THIS!
BUT, THEN, WHO COULD BE EXPECTED TO FATHOM THE CAREFUL PLANS OF OMORO KASYBE, THE PANTHER'S SECURITY CHIEF, WHOSE JOB IT IS TO DEVISE SUCH PLOYS.
AND WHO COULD ANTICIPATE THE WAKANDAN KING'S OWN UNORTHODOX ACTIONS IN THIS SITUATION!
PERHAPS IF ONE STUDIED CENTURIES OF WAKANDAN LORE, THESE FEATS WOULD SEEM LESS SURPRISING... OR, MORE LIKELY, THE PROWESS OF THE PANTHER-KING WOULD BE DISMISSED AS MYTH OR EXAGGERATION.
BUT IT IS THIS COMBINATION OF STRATEGY AND SKILL--WITH A TOUCH OF THE IMPOSSIBLE--THAT HAS MADE THE DYNASTY SO FORMIDIBLE FOR UNCOUNTED YEARS OF AFRICAN HISTORY!

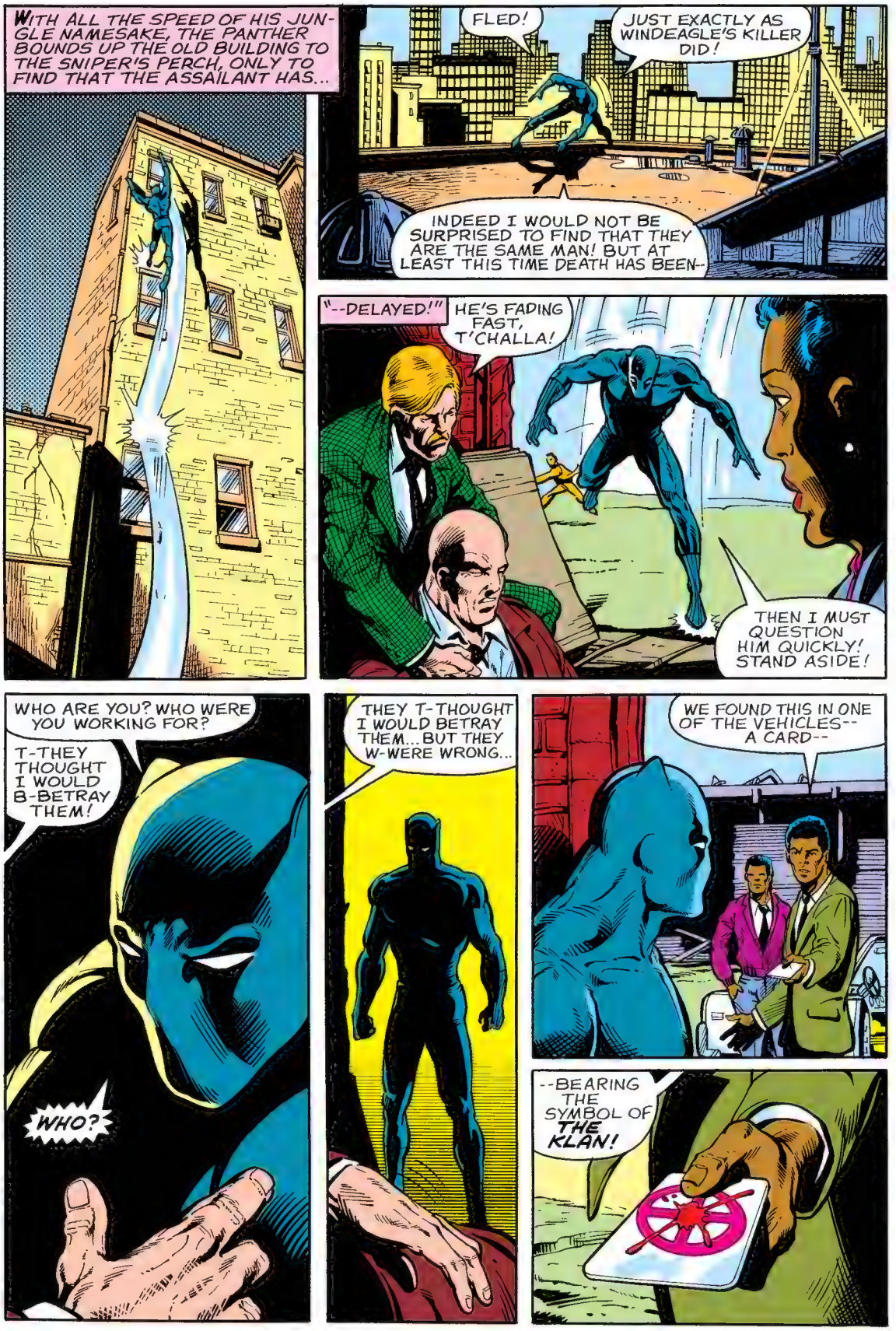

AT ANY RATE, THESE FOES WILL SOON LEARN FIRSTHAND THE FOLLY OF UNDERESTIMATING T'CHALLA'S PROWESS...
THUD
WHAT WAS THAT? ARE THEY THROWING STUFF AT US?
IMPOSSIBLE! THEY'RE TOO FAR AHEAD OF US!
HEY--THERE THEY GO, DOWN THAT DEAD END!
NOW WE'LL GET 'EM!
DO NOT
DEAD END
INSTEAD OF STOPPING, HOWEVER, THE SPEEDING LIMO BARRELS THROUGH THE FLIMSY WARNING BARRIERS WITH APPARENTLY SUICIDAL ABANDON...
DEAD END
...BUT IT'S ALL PART OF THE GRAND DECEPTION!
KLAK KLAK KRUNK
IF THE PURSUERS COULD CHECK, THEY'D FIND THAT THIS LUMBERYARD IS OWNED BY A WAKANDAN HOLDING COMPANY!
ALAS, IT IS FAR TOO LATE FOR THEM TO CHECK ON ANYTHING...
SKRASH
OH, NO--THE CAR'S TOTALLED!
DOESN'T MATTER--WE'VE GOT THEM CORNERED NOW!

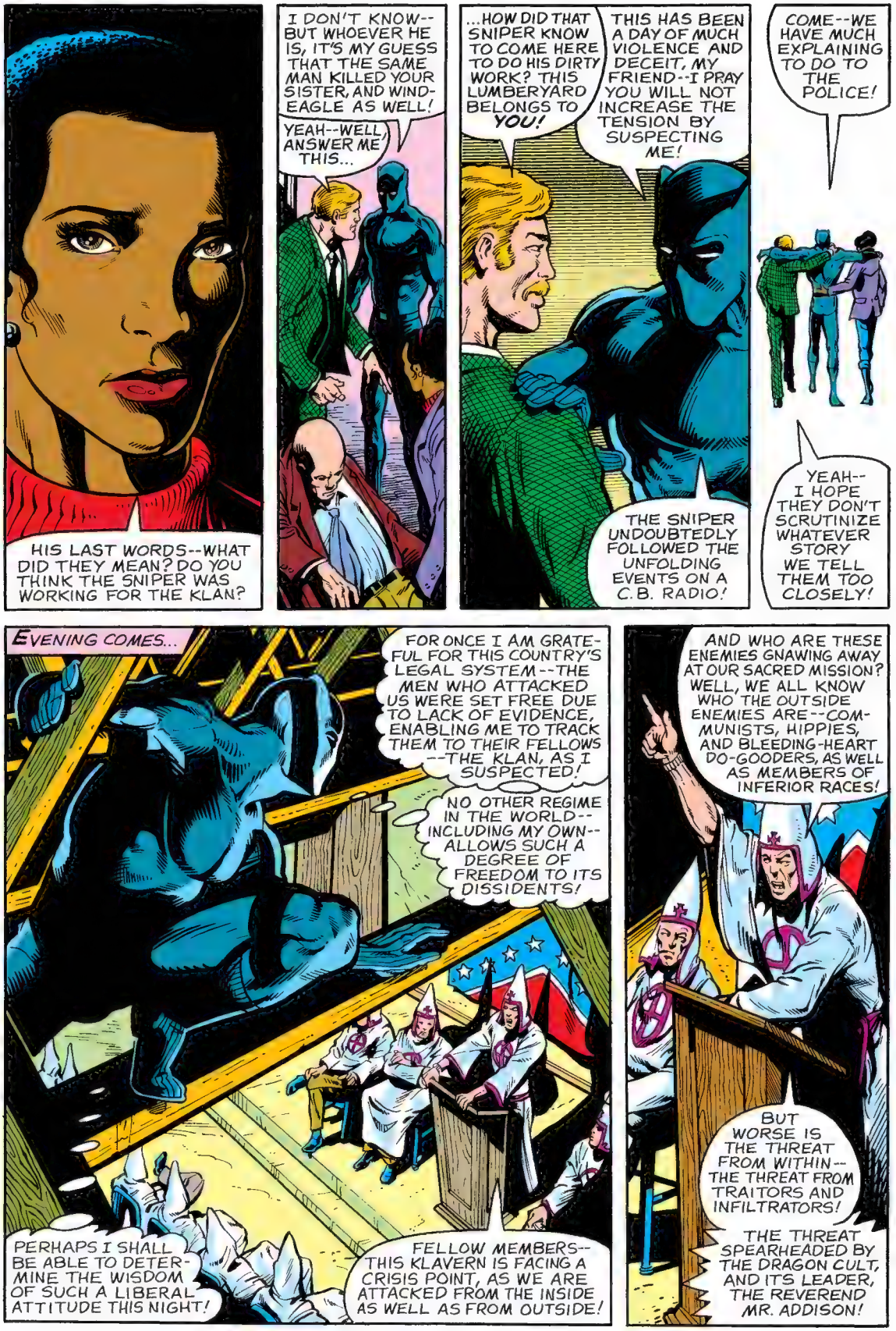

AN OLD WAKANDAN MAXIM CLAIMS THAT A HUNTER WHO HAS TO CHANGE HIS PLANS MORE THAN ONCE DURING THE CHASE HAS BEEN TRICKED INTO PLAYING THE LION'S GAME.
THE TRUTH OF THE SAYING SEEMS UNAFFECTED BY GEOGRAPHICAL DISTANCES.
C'MON--WE GOTTA TAKE THEM AS HOSTAGES!
JUST MAKE SURE THAT THE PANTHER IS NEUTRALIZED!
SOME MEN MUST PUT THEIR INTENTIONS INTO WORDS, BUT THE CAT STRIKES SILENTLY--THE IDEA AND THE ACTION ARE INSEPARABLE!
GAKK!
THUS, BEFORE THE BALD ONE HAS A CHANCE TO EVEN WARN HIS COHORTS, HE FINDS HIMSELF ALONE...
SPOK
POUM
...FACING THE ERSTWHILE OBJECT OF HIS HUNT...
PLOKK
...FOR THE BRIEFEST OF MOMENTS!


HE HITS LIKE LIGHTNING! BUT SHOULDN'T HE HAVE QUESTIONED THE GUY?
IT IS NOT OVER YET, MY FRIEND--SEE HOW T'CHALLA POSITIONS HIMSELF IN EXPECTATION OF FURTHER CONFLICT!
WE SHOULD DO LIKEWISE.
SURE ENOUGH, WITHIN MOMENTS...
CRAK POW
HERE THEY COME!
KEEP FIREING! WE'VE GOTTA PIN 'EM DOWN TILL WE FIND OUT WHAT THEY DID TO THE GUYS!
IF WE CAN'T CAPTURE THE PANTHER--KILL 'IM!
TAKAKAKA
IF T'CHALLA HOPED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THESE MEN, HE IS GOING TO BE DISAPPOINTED! THEY ARE FAR TOO DESPARATE FOR THAT!
HE'LL HAVE TO PRY THEIR SECRETS FROM THEM SOME OTHER WAY!
THE PANTHER MAY BE CONCERNED WITH SECRETS--OR WITH SIMPLE PRESERVATION OF LIFE... THE PRESCRIBED COURSE OF ACTION IS THE SAME...
POW
HEY!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU GUYS? CAN'T YOU SHOOT STRAIGHT?
FORGET ABOUT OUR SHOOTING, BOBBY--AN' DRIVE!
AWP!
THE THUG'S DIRECTIVE COMES TOO LATE TO BE ANYTHING BUT...

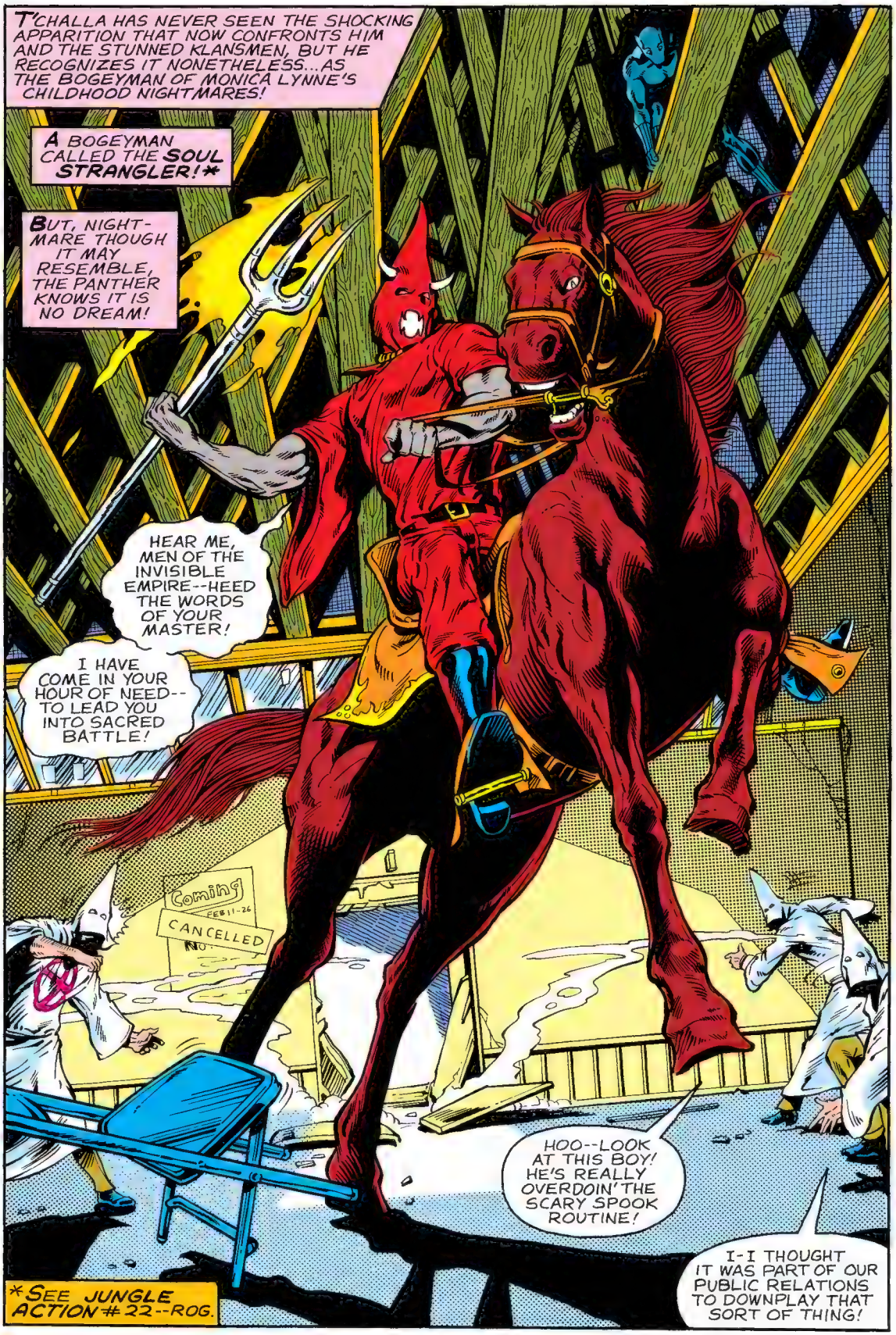

...IRONIC!
SKREEE
BA-VOOOM
YOU GOT GOOD MOVES, PANTHER-- BUT YOU SHOULDA WATCHED WHERE YOU WERE LANDING!
YOU FORCED OUR HAND, BUT IT'S WORKIN' OUT FOR US ANYWAY!
DON'T MAKE A MOVE!
YOUR OWN MEN ARE DYING IN THAT CAR-- WILL YOU NOT TRY TO-- SAVE THEM?
T'CHALLA NEITHER COWERS--
--NOR BETRAYS THE PRESENCE OF...
KEVIN TRUBLOOD TO THE RESCUE! NO FANCY COSTUME REQUIRED!
YOUR DISTAIN FOR THE CEREMONIAL PANTHER-GARB RINGS FALSE, KEVIN!
YAA!
THE GUNSEL REFUSES TO ACCEPT DEFEAT, AND REACHES FOR HIS WEAPON, BUT--
--THE PANTHER IS MORE THAN ABLE TO CONVINCE HIM OTHERWISE!
SOK

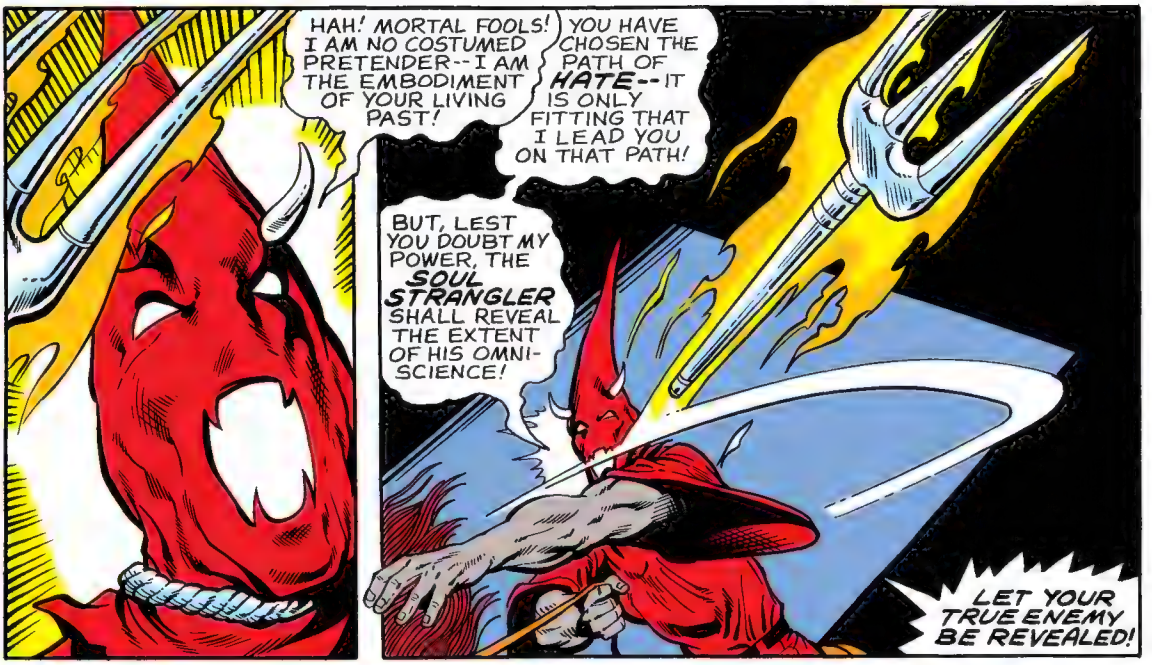

SECURE THESE MEN, TAKU! M'GARI, SEE IF THERE ARE ANY SURVIVORS OF THE CRASH!
I HAVE ALREADY DONE SO, MY KING-- THERE WERE NONE! ONE OF YOUR ORIGINAL FOES IS WAKING, THOUGH!
"SO I SEE..."
ALL RIGHT, LADY... STEP OUT SLOWLY AND DON'T MAKE ANY FALSE MOVES!
FALSE MOVES?
YOU PICKED THE WRONG LADY TO--
OH!
KRAK
YOW!
MY GOD! THAT SHOT CAME OUT OF NOWHERE!
ONCE AGAIN, THE JUNGLE KING SPRINGS INTO ACTION...
T'CHALLA-- HE'S ALREADY BEATEN... AND SOMEONE'S--!
BUT BEFORE MONICA CAN FINISH HER WARNING...
CRAKOW
T-THE PANTHER TRIED TO TACKLE HIM OUT OF THE WAY, BUT--!
M'GARI-- SNIPER!

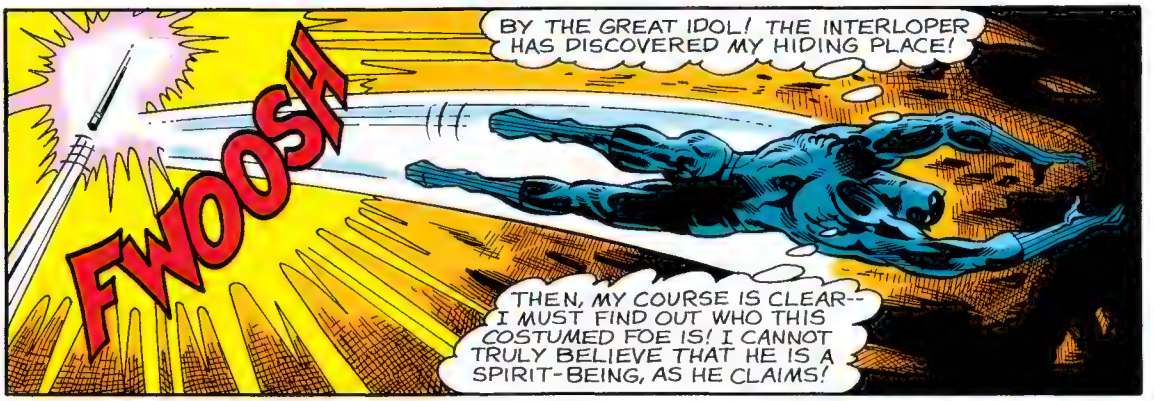

WITH ALL THE SPEED OF HIS JUNGLE NAMESAKE, THE PANTHER BOUNDS UP THE OLD BUILDING TO THE SNIPER'S PERCH, ONLY TO FIND THAT THE ASSAILANT HAS...
FLED!
JUST EXACTLY AS WINDEAGLE'S KILLER DID!
INDEED I WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED TO FIND THAT THEY ARE THE SAME MAN! BUT AT LEAST THIS TIME DEATH HAS BEEN--
"--DELAYED!"
HE'S FADING FAST, T'CHALLA!
THEN I MUST QUESTION HIM QUICKLY! STAND ASIDE!
WHO ARE YOU? WHO WERE YOU WORKING FOR?
T-THEY THOUGHT I WOULD B-BETRAY THEM!
WHO?
THEY T-THOUGHT I WOULD BETRAY THEM... BUT THEY W-WERE WRONG...
WE FOUND THIS IN ONE OF THE VEHICLES-- A CARD--
--BEARING THE SYMBOL OF THE KLAN!


HIS LAST WORDS--WHAT DID THEY MEAN? DO YOU THINK THE SNIPER WAS WORKING FOR THE KLAN?
I DON'T KNOW--BUT WHOEVER HE IS, IT'S MY GUESS THAT THE SAME MAN KILLED YOUR SISTER, AND WIND-EAGLE AS WELL!
YEAH--WELL, ANSWER ME THIS...
...HOW DID THAT SNIPER KNOW TO COME HERE TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK? THIS LUMBERYARD BELONGS TO YOU!
THIS HAS BEEN A DAY OF MUCH VIOLENCE AND DECEIT, MY FRIEND--I PRAY YOU WILL NOT INCREASE THE TENSION BY SUSPECTING ME!
THE SNIPER UNDOUBTEDLY FOLLOWED THE UNFOLDING EVENTS ON A C.B. RADIO!
COME--WE HAVE MUCH EXPLAINING TO DO TO THE POLICE!
YEAH--I HOPE THEY DON'T SCRUTINIZE WHATEVER STORY WE TELL THEM TOO CLOSELY!
EVENING COMES...
FOR ONCE I AM GRATEFUL FOR THIS COUNTRY'S LEGAL SYSTEM--THE MEN WHO ATTACKED US WERE SET FREE DUE TO LACK OF EVIDENCE, ENABLING ME TO TRACK THEM TO THEIR FELLOWS--THE KLAN, AS I SUSPECTED!
NO OTHER REGIME IN THE WORLD--INCLUDING MY OWN--ALLOWS SUCH A DEGREE OF FREEDOM TO ITS DISSIDENTS!
PERHAPS I SHALL BE ABLE TO DETERMINE THE WISDOM OF SUCH A LIBERAL ATTITUDE THIS NIGHT!
FELLOW MEMBERS--THIS KLAVERN IS FACING A CRISIS POINT, AS WE ARE ATTACKED FROM THE INSIDE AS WELL AS FROM OUTSIDE!
AND WHO ARE THESE ENEMIES GNAWING AWAY AT OUR SACRED MISSION? WELL, WE ALL KNOW WHO THE OUTSIDE ENEMIES ARE--COMMUNISTS, HIPPIES, AND BLEEDING-HEART DO-GOODERS, AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF INFERIOR RACES!
BUT WORSE IS THE THREAT FROM WITHIN--THE THREAT FROM TRAITORS AND INFILTRATORS!
THE THREAT SPEARHEADED BY THE DRAGON CULT, AND ITS LEADER, THE REVEREND MR. ADDISON!

SURE--SOME OF YOU REMEMBER THAT NAME! ADDISON WAS ONCE A HIGH-RANKING MEMBER OF THE SOUTHERN BRANCH OF THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE!
AND IF YOU REMEMBER THAT, YOU CAN NEVER FORGET HIS TREACHERY! THE REVEREND USED US--PRETENDED TO BE ONE OF US AND IT WAS ALL A FRONT FOR HIS MONEY-GRUBBING CULT!
AND WHEN THE PAPERS GOT WIND OF THE REAL ESTATE DEALS HE SET UP, THE KLAN GOT SMEARED WITH SCANDAL!
WHAM
WELL--HE'S STILL TRYING TO USE US! ONLY NOW, WE FIGHT BACK! THE REVEREND HAS TO BE ELIMINATED, HIS CULT DESTROYED!
"JUST TODAY, SEVERAL OF OUR MEMBERS WERE EXECUTED BY THE CULT'S BRAIN-WASHED SECRET WEAPON, THE BLACK PANTHER!
"BUT THE BIGGEST THREAT COMES FROM SPIES PLANTED WITHIN OUR ORGANIZATION, SUCKING AWAY OUR VITAL ESSENCE LIKE PARASITES!"
AMAZING, THAT THIS CULTURE WILL SUFFER A BLATANT DEMAGOGUE TO PROSPER, WHILE SO MANY WHO ARE TRULY DESERVING ARE IGNORED!
MY WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED--THIS IS WAR BETWEEN TWO LUNATIC FACTIONS, WITH INNOCENTS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE!
AND FROM WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT MONICA'S SISTER'S DEATH, IT IS MORE THAN A CLASH OF IDEOLOGIES. MUCH POWER AND PROPERTY IS AT STAKE HERE!
OUR FIRST STEP MUST BE TO FERRET OUT THE INFILTRATORS! NO ONE SHALL BE ABOVE SUSPICION! UNTIL THE CRISIS IS OVER, WE ALL HAVE TO KEEP AN EYE ON EACH OTHER...
ANY SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY MUST BE REPORTED TO THE COUNCIL! YOU KNOW YOUR DUTY --NOW DO IT!
YEAH!
RIGHT!
YEAH!
CHARITY BAZAAR TUESDAY
EXIT
NOW, BROTHER PURVIS WILL FILL IN SOME OF THE DETAILS ABOUT THE THREAT THAT WE FACE...
THANK YOU, JOHN. AS WE ALL KNOW, THIS ORGANIZATION IS THE LAST BASTION OF REAL FREEDOM FOR CIVILIZED PEOPLE...
EXIT
BWAVOOM
HUH?!

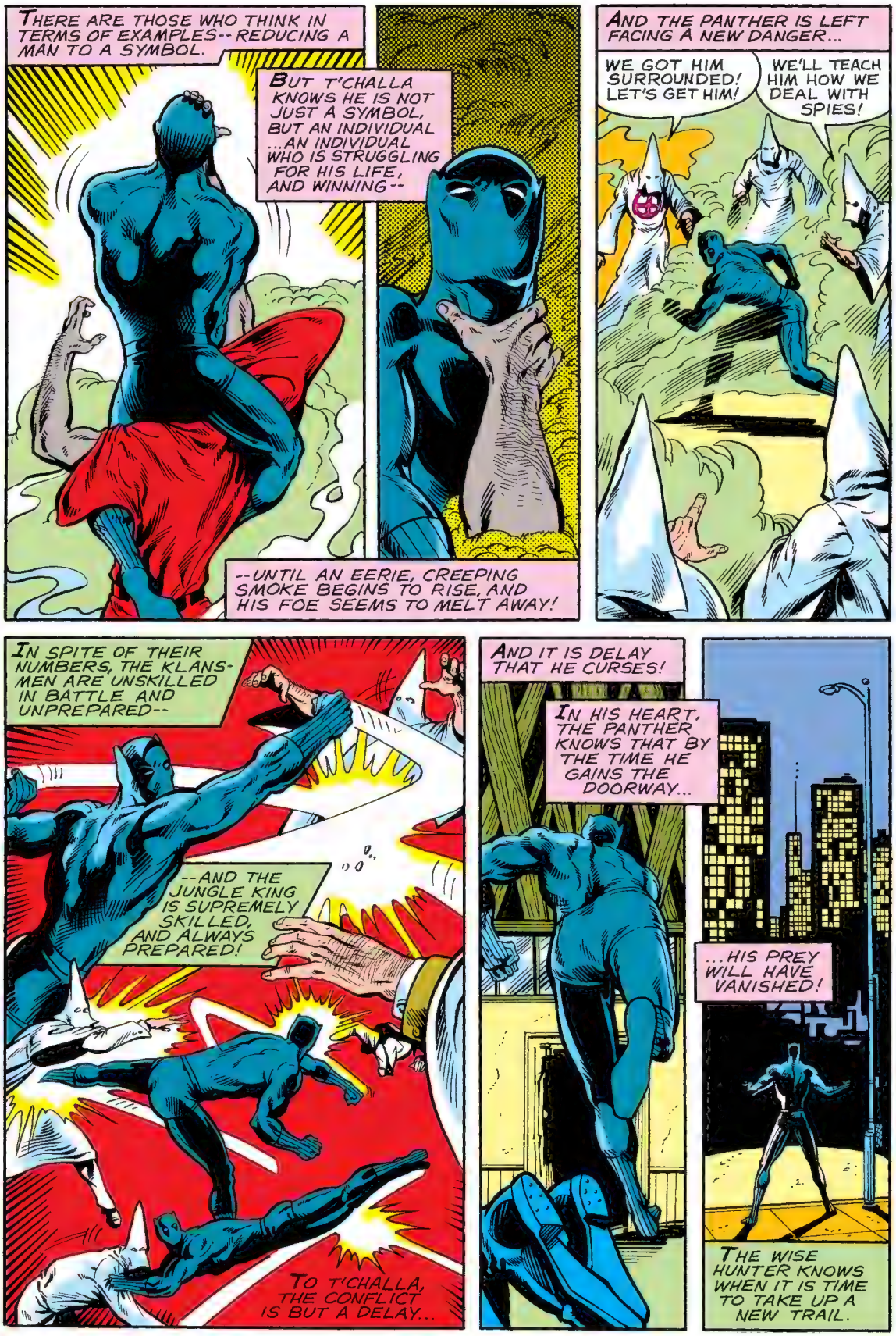

T'CHALLA HAS NEVER SEEN THE SHOCKING APPARITION THAT NOW CONFRONTS HIM AND THE STUNNED KLANSMEN, BUT HE RECOGNIZES IT NONETHELESS...AS THE BOGEYMAN OF MONICA LYNNE'S CHILDHOOD NIGHTMARES!
A BOGEYMAN CALLED THE SOUL STRANGLER!*
BUT, NIGHT-MARE THOUGH IT MAY RESEMBLE, THE PANTHER KNOWS IT IS NO DREAM!
HEAR ME, MEN OF THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE--HEED THE WORDS OF YOUR MASTER!
I HAVE COME IN YOUR HOUR OF NEED--TO LEAD YOU INTO SACRED BATTLE!
Coming
FEB 11-26
CANCELLED
HOO--LOOK AT THIS BOY! HE'S REALLY OVERDOIN' THE SCARY SPOOK ROUTINE!
I-I THOUGHT IT WAS PART OF OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS TO DOWNPLAY THAT SORT OF THING!
*SEE JUNGLE ACTION #22--ROG.

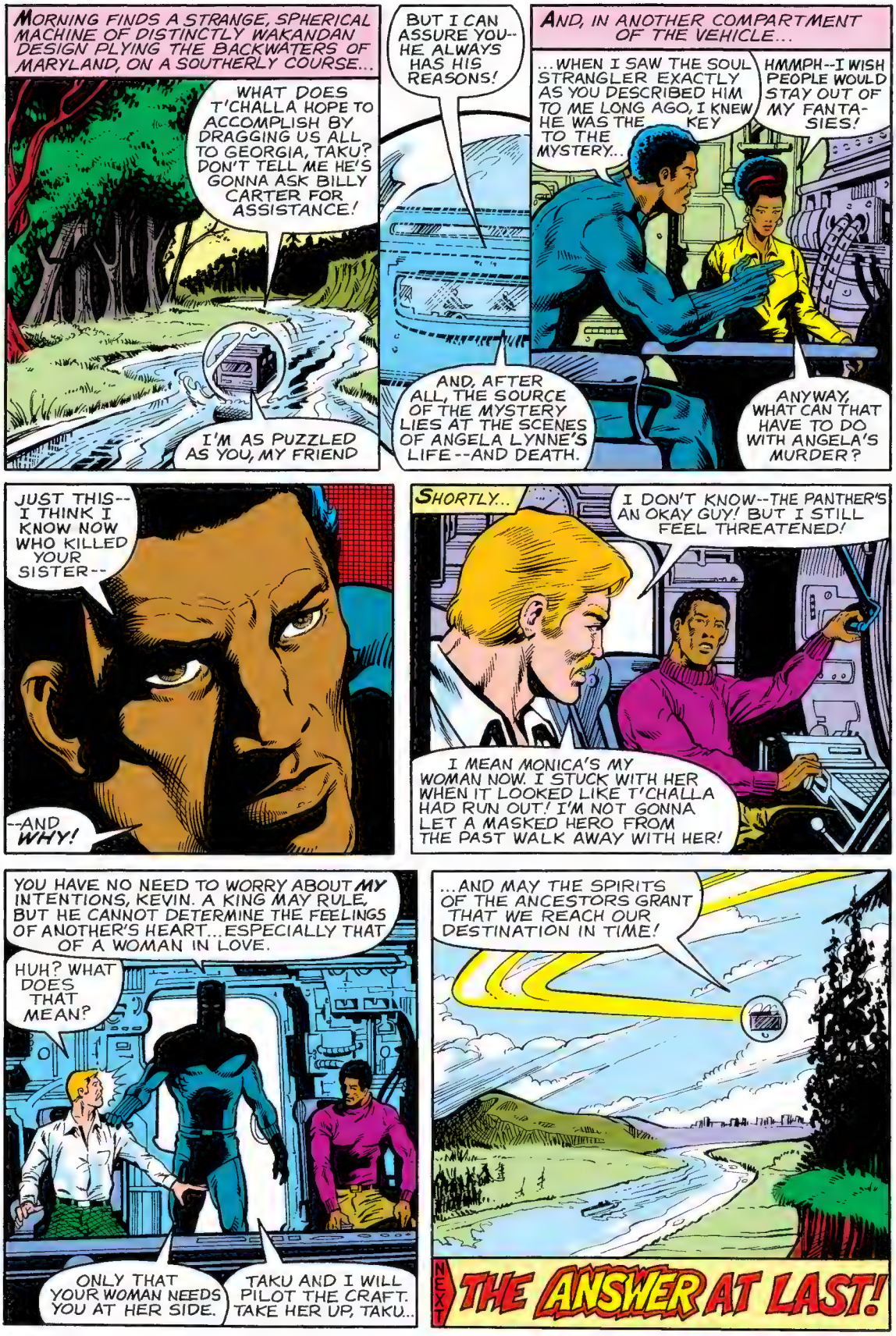

HAH! MORTAL FOOLS! I AM NO COSTUMED PRETENDER--I AM THE EMBODIMENT OF YOUR LIVING PAST!
YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE PATH OF HATE--IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT I LEAD YOU ON THAT PATH!
BUT, LEST YOU DOUBT MY POWER, THE SOUL STRANGLER SHALL REVEAL THE EXTENT OF HIS OMNI-SCIENCE!
LET YOUR TRUE ENEMY BE REVEALED!

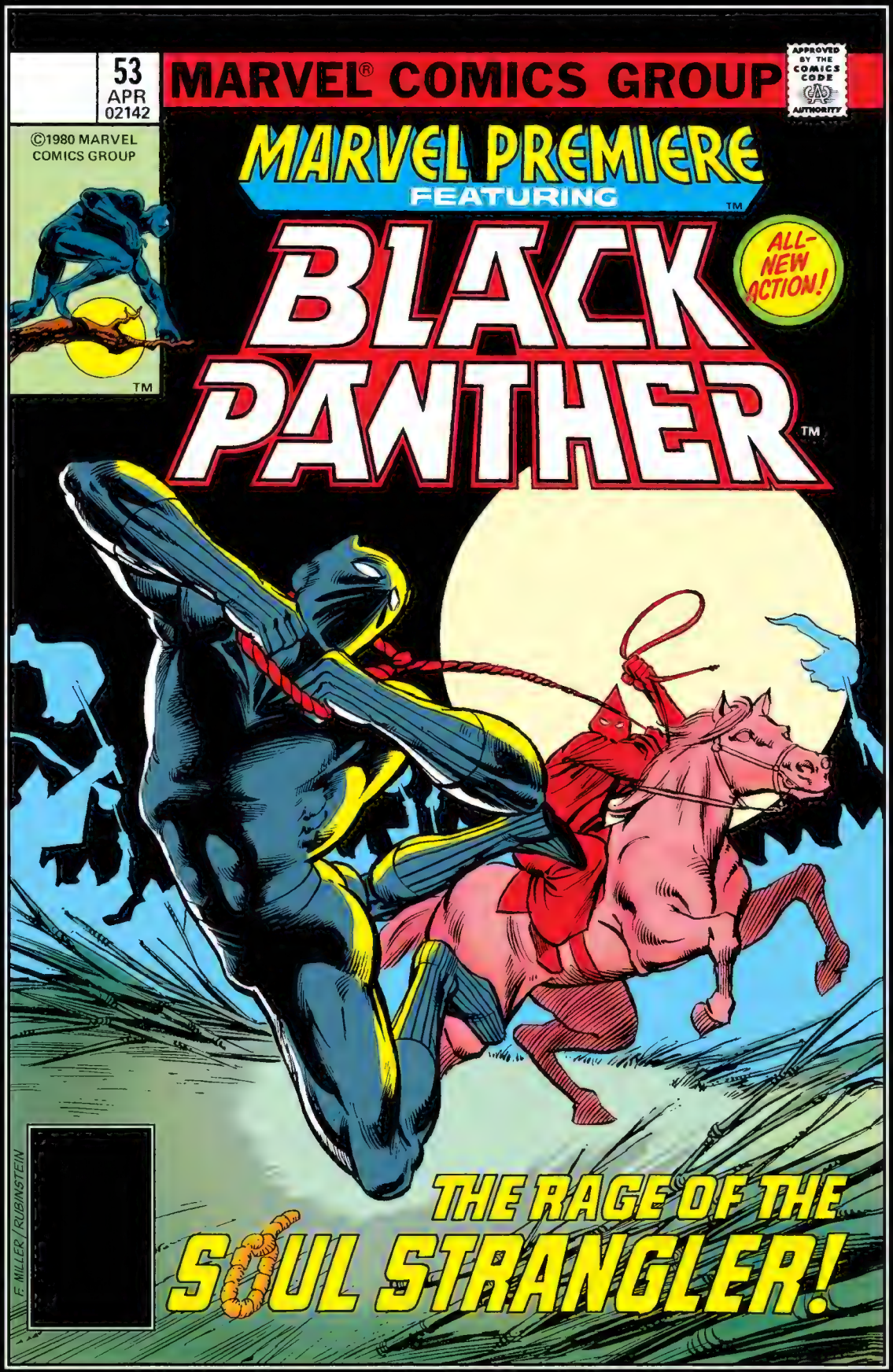

FWOOSH
BY THE GREAT IDOL! THE INTERLOPER HAS DISCOVERED MY HIDING PLACE!
THEN, MY COURSE IS CLEAR--I MUST FIND OUT WHO THIS COSTUMED FOE IS! I CANNOT TRULY BELIEVE THAT HE IS A SPIRIT-BEING, AS HE CLAIMS!

HOLY--! OUT OF THE RAFTERS--IT'S THE BLACK PANTHER!
THEY'RE PROBABLY IN CAHOOTS WITH EACH OTHER!

AH--THE CAT PRESUMES TO ATTACK!
VERY WELL--I'LL MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF YOU, THEN!


THERE ARE THOSE WHO THINK IN TERMS OF EXAMPLES--REDUCING A MAN TO A SYMBOL.
BUT T'CHALLA KNOWS HE IS NOT JUST A SYMBOL, BUT AN INDIVIDUAL ...AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS STRUGGLING FOR HIS LIFE, AND WINNING--
--UNTIL AN EERIE, CREEPING SMOKE BEGINS TO RISE, AND HIS FOE SEEMS TO MELT AWAY!
AND THE PANTHER IS LEFT FACING A NEW DANGER...
WE GOT HIM SURROUNDED! LET'S GET HIM!
WE'LL TEACH HIM HOW WE DEAL WITH SPIES!
IN SPITE OF THEIR NUMBERS, THE KLANSMEN ARE UNSKILLED IN BATTLE AND UNPREPARED--
--AND THE JUNGLE KING IS SUPREMELY SKILLED, AND ALWAYS PREPARED!
TO T'CHALLA, THE CONFLICT IS BUT A DELAY...
AND IT IS DELAY THAT HE CURSES!
IN HIS HEART, THE PANTHER KNOWS THAT BY THE TIME HE GAINS THE DOORWAY...
...HIS PREY WILL HAVE VANISHED!
THE WISE HUNTER KNOWS WHEN IT IS TIME TO TAKE UP A NEW TRAIL.


MORNING FINDS A STRANGE, SPHERICAL MACHINE OF DISTINCTLY WAKANDAN DESIGN PLYING THE BACKWATERS OF MARYLAND, ON A SOUTHERLY COURSE...
WHAT DOES T'CHALLA HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH BY DRAGGING US ALL TO GEORGIA, TAKU? DON'T TELL ME HE'S GONNA ASK BILLY CARTER FOR ASSISTANCE!
I'M AS PUZZLED AS YOU, MY FRIEND
BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU-- HE ALWAYS HAS HIS REASONS!
AND, AFTER ALL, THE SOURCE OF THE MYSTERY LIES AT THE SCENES OF ANGELA LYNNE'S LIFE--AND DEATH.
AND, IN ANOTHER COMPARTMENT OF THE VEHICLE...
...WHEN I SAW THE SOUL STRANGLER EXACTLY AS YOU DESCRIBED HIM TO ME LONG AGO, I KNEW HE WAS THE KEY TO THE MYSTERY...
HMMPH--I WISH PEOPLE WOULD STAY OUT OF MY FANTASIES!
ANYWAY, WHAT CAN THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ANGELA'S MURDER?
JUST THIS-- I THINK I KNOW NOW WHO KILLED YOUR SISTER--
--AND WHY!
SHORTLY...
I DON'T KNOW--THE PANTHER'S AN OKAY GUY! BUT I STILL FEEL THREATENED!
I MEAN MONICA'S MY WOMAN NOW. I STUCK WITH HER WHEN IT LOOKED LIKE T'CHALLA HAD RUN OUT! I'M NOT GONNA LET A MASKED HERO FROM THE PAST WALK AWAY WITH HER!
YOU HAVE NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT MY INTENTIONS, KEVIN. A KING MAY RULE, BUT HE CANNOT DETERMINE THE FEELINGS OF ANOTHER'S HEART...ESPECIALLY THAT OF A WOMAN IN LOVE.
HUH? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
ONLY THAT YOUR WOMAN NEEDS YOU AT HER SIDE.
TAKU AND I WILL PILOT THE CRAFT. TAKE HER UP, TAKU...
...AND MAY THE SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS GRANT THAT WE REACH OUR DESTINATION IN TIME!
NEXT
THE ANSWER AT LAST!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MARVEL PREMIERE
FEATURING
BLACK PANTHER™
ALL-NEW ACTION!
THE RAGE OF THE SOUL STRANGLER!
F. MILLER/RUBINSTEIN

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE BLACK PANTHER!®

CAMEL
C.B. Called
EACH DAY BRINGS ITS OWN HEADACHES TO LT. JEROME AZOFF, AS HE COUNTS OFF THE WEEKS TO A PROMOTION UPSTAIRS TO A NICE, SAFE DESK JOB.
IF A FIFTEEN YEAR CAREER IN THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT'S HOMICIDE DIVISION HASN'T WORN DOWN HIS CUTTING EDGE COMPLETELY, HE MUSES, TODAY'S HEADLINE WILL SURELY FINISH THE JOB...
DAILY BUGLE
THE PICTURE NEWSPAPER
KLAN RALLY RAIDED
BATTLE RAGES AMIDST LOCAL KLAN MEETING!
WAKANDAN EMBASSY REFUSES COMMENT
OIL HIKE FEARED TO JEOPARDIZE PRICE STABIL
Photo P. PARKER
EX-AVENGER SUSPECTED OF INVOLVEMENT IN RAID!
BLAST IT! IF THERE'S ANYTHING I HATE MORE THAN HAVING MY CASES SPLASHED ACROSS THE FRONT PAGE...
--IT'S LOOSE ENDS...
THE ENDING, IN ANGER!
EX-AVENGER, THE BLACK PANTHER, INVOLVED IN RAID ON KU KLUX-KLAN MEETING ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT

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LF723

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AND YOU, MR. LEROY AMES, ARE GONNA TIE UP THOSE LOOSE ENDS, IF WE HAVE TO STAY HERE ALL WEEK!
CULTS, KKK, SUPER HEROES AND VILLAINS--I GOT A FEELING YOU KNOW HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER!
BULL! I KNOW MY RIGHTS!
YOU'RE GETTIN' NOTHIN' FROM ME!
SO YOU FOUND ME IN A CAR OUTSIDE A KLAN RALLY--UNCONSCIOUS! WHAT CAN YOU HANG ON ME? A LOUSY GUN CHARGE! GO AHEAD AND PUT ME IN JAIL--I'VE BEEN THERE BEFORE!
THE PANTHER TOLD ME YOU'D REACT THAT WAY--
--HE ALSO TOLD ME HOW YOU MURDERED THE RUIZ KID--WINDEAGLE!*
AND THE GIRL DOWN IN GEORGIA--ANGELA LYNNE!*
SO WHERE'S YOUR PANTHER NOW? WHERE'S YOUR EVIDENCE?
*MP #51 **JUNGLE ACTION #19-24--JIM.
AND, AT THE SAME TIME, THE SAME QUESTIONS ARE BEING ASKED AT THE WAKANDAN CONSULATE BY THE HONORABLE MINIONS OF THE FOURTH ESTATE...
GENTLEMEN, PLEASE--IF YOU'LL ALL QUIET DOWN, THE SECRETARY WILL READ A STATEMENT--
IS IT TRUE THAT THE PANTHER ATTACKED A MEETING OF THE KU KLUX KLAN?
WHAT ABOUT THE SHOOTING OF THAT WINDEAGLE CHARACTER?
HAS THE PANTHER LEFT THE COUNTRY?
AW--LET 'EM READ THE STATEMENT ALREADY!
"THANK YOU. THE WAKANDAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS WISHES TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR KING, T'CHALLA OF THE PANTHER CLAN, HAS LEFT ON A TRIP TO YOUR SOUTHERN STATES FOR PERSONAL REASONS!
"HE WILL RETURN IN A FEW DAYS, AND ALL YOUR QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED AT THAT TIME...THANK YOU."
MOMMA--
MONICA, MY LITTLE BABY! MY YOU LOOK SO THIN! AIN'T YOU BEEN EATIN' RIGHT?
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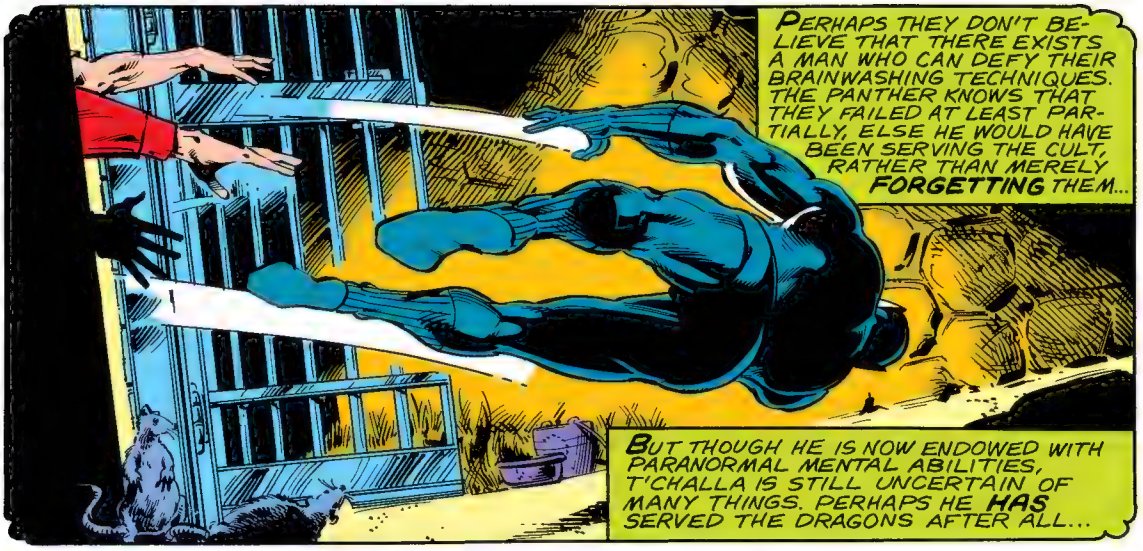
THAT'S THE PANTHER'S AIRSHIP--JUNGLE JIM.
GREETINGS, MR. LYNNE. I SEE YOUR HOME IS JUST THE SAME AS I REMEMBER IT.
HEY--IT AIN'T THE TAJ MAHAL OR ANYTHING LIKE YOU GOT OVER IN AFRICA, BUT WE LIKE IT--AN' IT'S ALL PAID OFF!

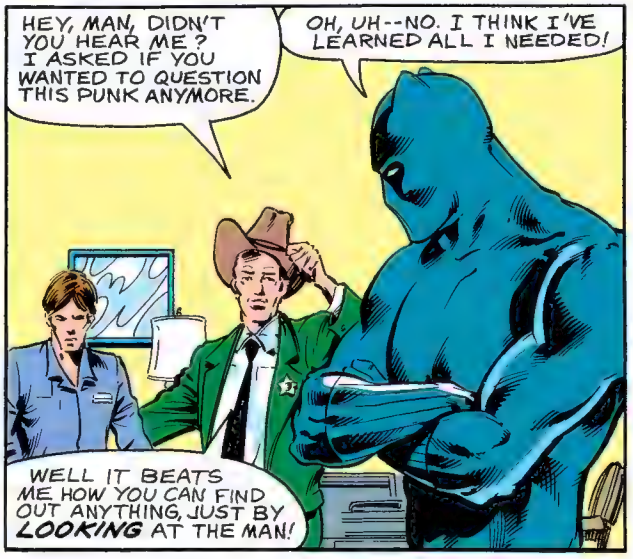
OH, DADDY--YOU KNOW HE DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING LIKE THAT!
YEAH--MONICA TOLD US YOU BEEN HAVIN' TROUBLE WITH YOUR MEMORY, AN' THAT'S WHY YOU AIN'T BEEN AROUND TO SEE US!
AND HOW HAVE YOU BEEN, KEVIN?
THAT IS CORRECT, MR. LYNNE.
LAND SAKES! WHAT'S THE WORLD COMIN' TO? HOW COULD SUCH A THING HAPPEN?
DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING 'BOUT HOW IT HAPPENED, DO YOU?
I'VE BEEN TRYING--BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER MUCH BESIDES SHADOWS, SHAPES...
AND THE PAIN!
"PAIN, FOR I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG! MANY VOICES--FACES...
"FACES ALMOST ALWAYS SHROUDED IN SHIFTING DARKNESS...
"AND ONE...NAME THAT GOES WITH THE FACES...
"THEY CALLED HIM--THE REVERAND!"
T'CHALLA!
HEY, MAN--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

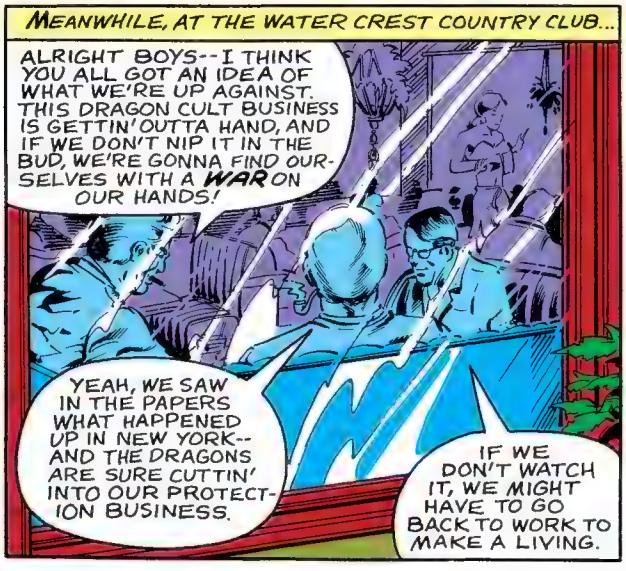
I-I'M FINE. I JUST FELT A LITTLE DIZZY!
THE STRAIN OF REMEMBERING--OR MAYBE THE CULT IMPLANTED A HYPNOTIC TRAUMA REACTION TO PROTECT THEM IF YOU SHOULD START TO SHAKE OFF THEIR BRAINWASHING!
YOU ALMOST GIVE ME A HEART ATTACK!
YOU MENTIONED THE "CULT", KEVIN-- THAT MUST BE THE DRAGON CIRCLE THAT'S SO POPULAR AROUND THESE PARTS! YOU STILL FIGHTIN' THEM?
THEY BEEN AWFUL QUIET LATELY.
YEAH--EVER SINCE THE KLAN KILLED ANGELA!
WE DON'T KNOW THAT THE KLAN WAS BEHIND YOUR DAUGHTER'S DEATH, MR. LYNNE. THAT'S WHY I CAME DOWN HERE!
AND THE FIRST PERSON I WANT TO TALK TO IS...
"...SHERIFF BRODERICK TATE."
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN IN A JAIL SINCE I LOST MY JOB ON THE GEORGIA SUN! IT STILL MAKES ME NERVOUS, EVEN ON THIS SIDE OF THE BARS!
WELL, I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE YOU IN THESE PARTS AGAIN, PANTHER--BUT I SHOULDA KNOWN BETTER AFTER I READ IN THE PAPER 'BOUT ALL THE FUSS YOU CAUSED IN NEW YORK!
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE A ROUGH TIME PROVIN' LEROY AMES COMITTED THOSE MURDERS-- BUT IF THERE'S EVIDENCE TO BE FOUND, I RECKON IT'S DOWN HERE IN HIS OLD STOMPIN' GROUNDS!
SHERIFF, LEROY HAS BEEN CHARGED ONLY WITH--
YEAH, I KNOW-- A FIREARMS VIOLATION. BUT I CAN SEE WHERE YOU'RE GOING WITH IT, WE REDNECK CRACKERS GOT SOME BRAINS, TOO-- NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK OF JIMMY CARTER!
ANYWAY, IT FITS IN WITH ALL THE QUESTIONS YOU'VE BEEN ASKIN' ABOUT THE DRAGON CIRCLE. NOT TO MENTION THE PRISONER YOU WANTED TO SEE...
...AN' THERE HE IS--ROMAN SCAGGS, THE OWNER OF THE RIFLE FOUND AT THE SCENE OF WINDEAGLE'S MURDER!
HE'S BEEN HERE A YEAR ON AN ASSAULT CHARGE!

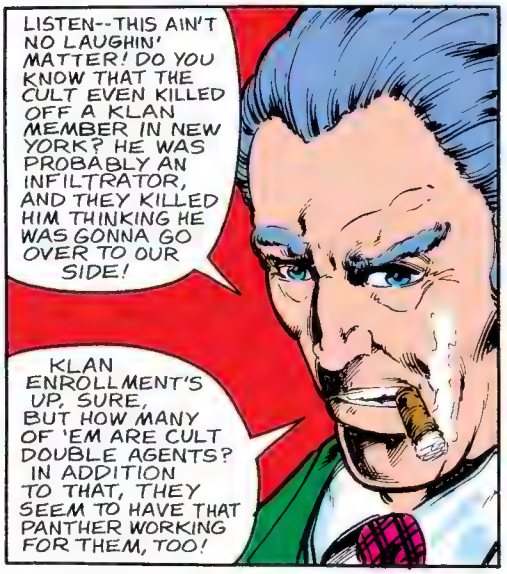
HAVE YOU CONFIRMED THAT HE IS A MEMBER OF THE DRAGON CIRCLE?
OH, YEAH--HE MAKES NO SECRET OF THAT!
REAL SUPERIOR ACTIN' TYPE TOO! KINDA TURNS MY STOMACH!
PERHAPS THE YOUNG MAN COULD EXPLAIN HOW A GUN BELONGING TO HIM COULD BE USED IN A MURDER IN ANOTHER STATE.
NAH--WE BEEN OVER ALL THAT. "GUNS CAN GET STOLEN, YOU KNOW."
I CAN SEE YOUR VEILED THREATS FOR WHAT THEY ARE, TATE--RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION! I AM A PEACEFUL MEMBER OF A NON-VIOLENT BROTHERHOOD DEVOTED TO JUSTICE!
WHY DON'T YOU GO AFTER REAL CRIMINALS--LIKE THE KLAN?
T'CHALLA STOPS LISTENING AND GAZES AT THE BOY'S FACE, WHICH SEEMS TO SHIFT IN HIS MIND'S EYE--BECOMING MALEVOLENT, AND VAGUELY FAMILIAR!
AND, ONCE AGAIN, THE IMAGES FLASH--BUT THEY ARE CLEARER THIS TIME, MORE DETAILED!
BUT THE PAIN IS SOMEHOW--LESS REAL!
WHY DON'T THEY JUST KILL ME, THE PANTHER WONDERS. WHY THE TORTURE, THE VAIN ATTEMPT AT INDOCTRINATION?
FOR, EVEN CHAINED, THE HEIR TO THE PANTHER THRONE CAN BE DANGEROUS!
STILL, THERE IS A LIMIT TO WHAT ONE MAN CAN DO...
...AND THESE MEN ARE ADEPT AT USING LIMITS!

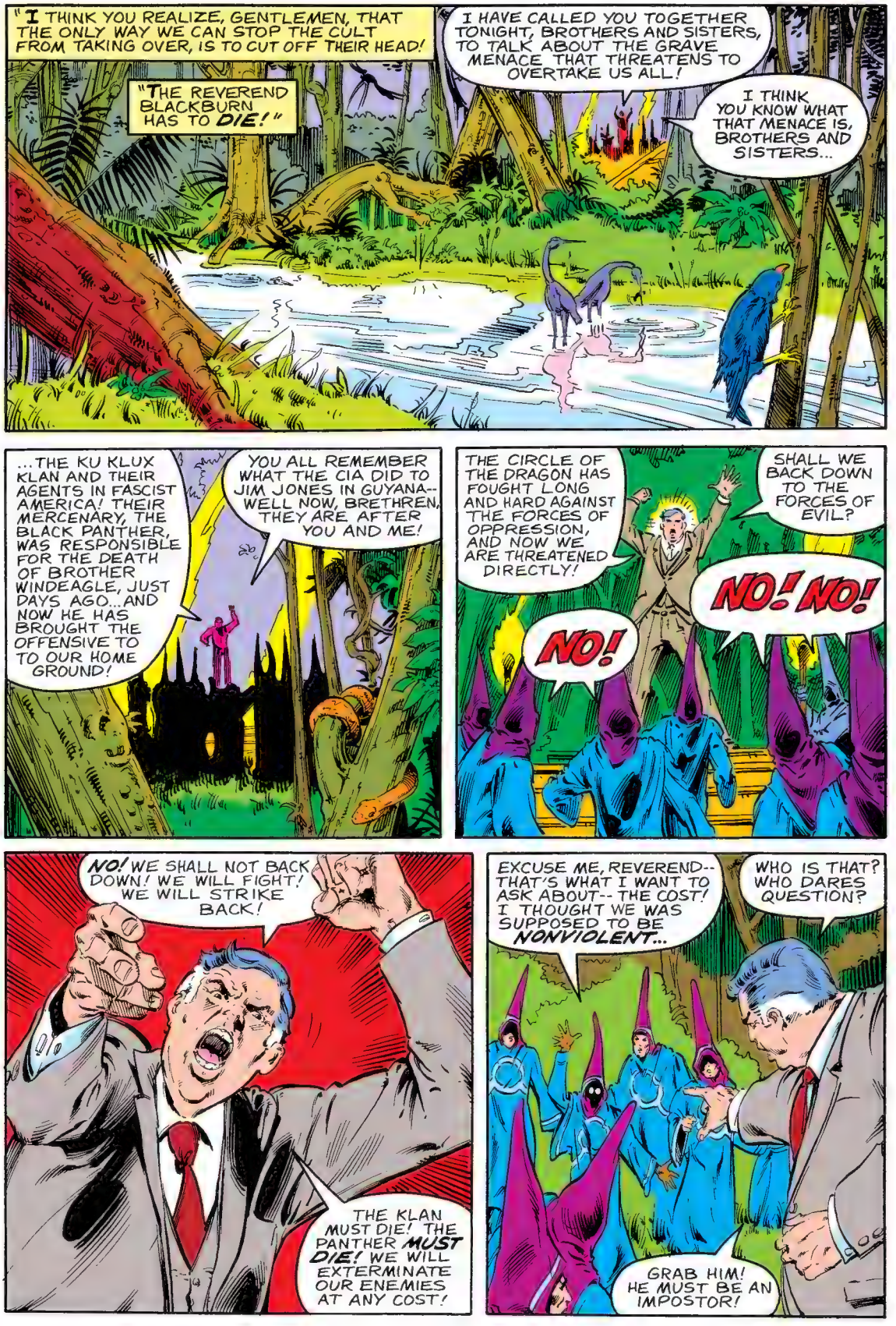

PERHAPS THEY DON'T BELIEVE THAT THERE EXISTS A MAN WHO CAN DEFY THEIR BRAINWASHING TECHNIQUES. THE PANTHER KNOWS THAT THEY FAILED AT LEAST PARTIALLY, ELSE HE WOULD HAVE BEEN SERVING THE CULT, RATHER THAN MERELY FORGETTING THEM...
BUT THOUGH HE IS NOW ENDOWED WITH PARANORMAL MENTAL ABILITIES, T'CHALLA IS STILL UNCERTAIN OF MANY THINGS. PERHAPS HE HAS SERVED THE DRAGONS AFTER ALL...

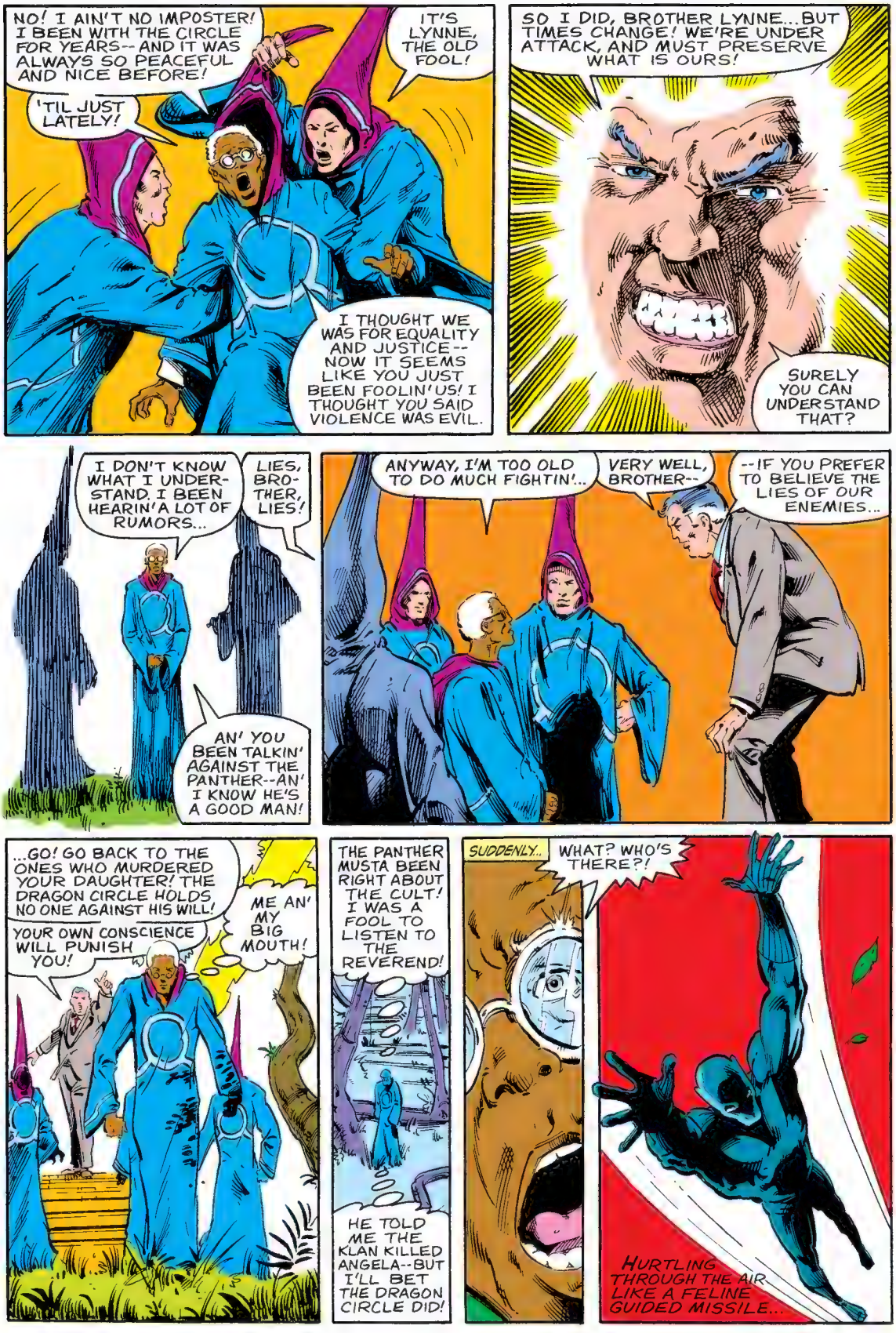
WHO CAN TRULY SAY? THE THOUGHT LENDS STRENGTH TO HIS RESOLVE. HE MUST FIND OUT!


HEY, MAN, DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME? I ASKED IF YOU WANTED TO QUESTION THIS PUNK ANYMORE.
OH, UH--NO. I THINK I'VE LEARNED ALL I NEEDED!
WELL IT BEATS ME HOW YOU CAN FIND OUT ANYTHING, JUST BY LOOKING AT THE MAN!


MEANWHILE, AT THE WATER CREST COUNTRY CLUB...
ALRIGHT BOYS--I THINK YOU ALL GOT AN IDEA OF WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST. THIS DRAGON CULT BUSINESS IS GETTIN'OUTTA HAND, AND IF WE DON'T NIP IT IN THE BUD, WE'RE GONNA FIND OURSELVES WITH A WAR ON OUR HANDS!
YEAH, WE SAW IN THE PAPERS WHAT HAPPENED UP IN NEW YORK--AND THE DRAGONS ARE SURE CUTTIN' INTO OUR PROTECTION BUSINESS.
IF WE DON'T WATCH IT, WE MIGHT HAVE TO GO BACK TO WORK TO MAKE A LIVING.

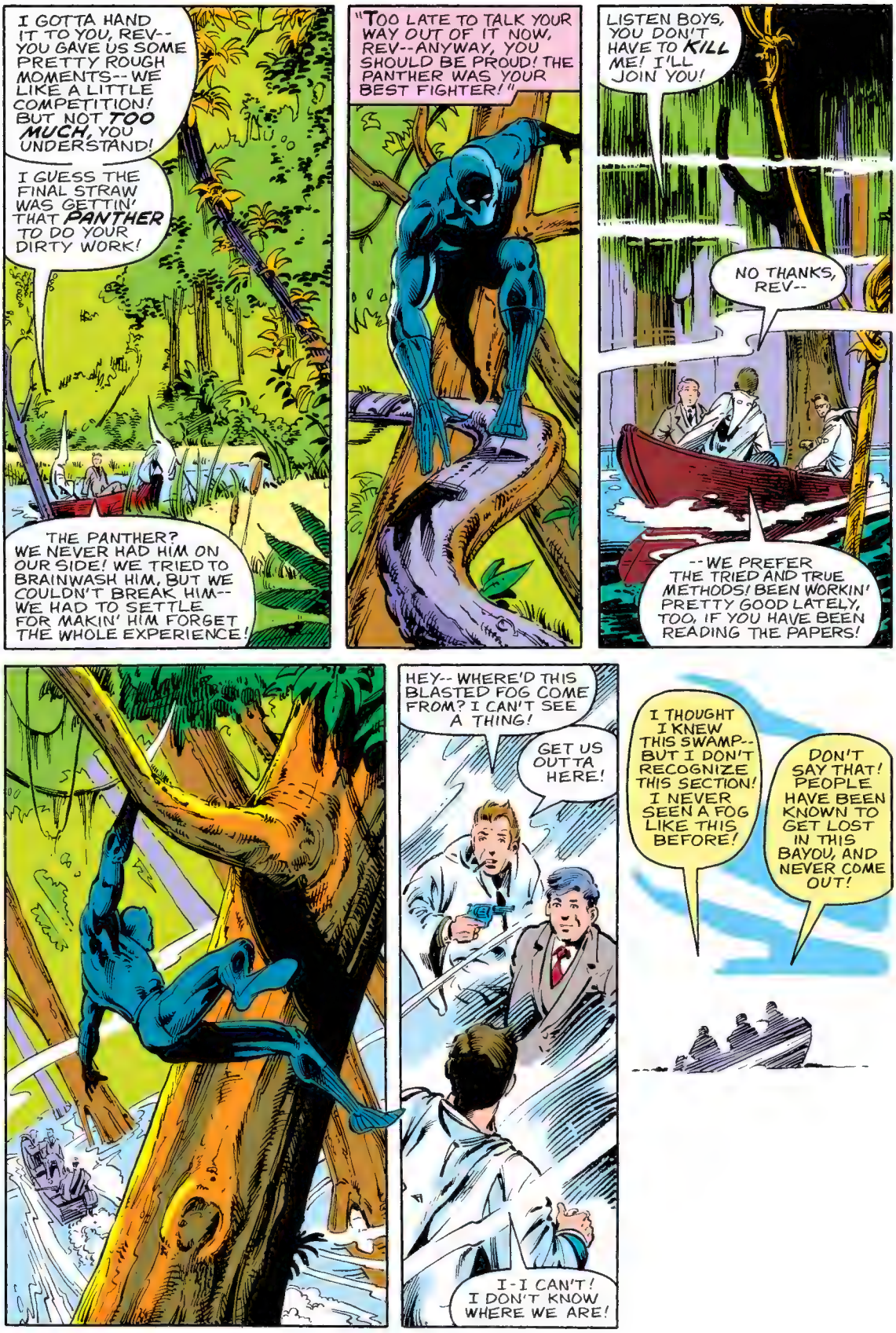

LISTEN--THIS AIN'T NO LAUGHIN' MATTER! DO YOU KNOW THAT THE CULT EVEN KILLED OFF A KLAN MEMBER IN NEW YORK? HE WAS PROBABLY AN INFILTRATOR, AND THEY KILLED HIM THINKING HE WAS GONNA GO OVER TO OUR SIDE!
KLAN ENROLLMENT'S UP, SURE, BUT HOW MANY OF 'EM ARE CULT DOUBLE AGENTS? IN ADDITION TO THAT, THEY SEEM TO HAVE THAT PANTHER WORKING FOR THEM, TOO!


"I THINK YOU REALIZE, GENTLEMEN, THAT THE ONLY WAY WE CAN STOP THE CULT FROM TAKING OVER, IS TO CUT OFF THEIR HEAD!
"THE REVEREND BLACKBURN HAS TO DIE!"
I HAVE CALLED YOU TOGETHER TONIGHT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, TO TALK ABOUT THE GRAVE MENACE THAT THREATENS TO OVERTAKE US ALL!
I THINK YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MENACE IS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS...
...THE KU KLUX KLAN AND THEIR AGENTS IN FASCIST AMERICA! THEIR MERCENARY, THE BLACK PANTHER, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF BROTHER WINDEAGLE, JUST DAYS AGO...AND NOW HE HAS BROUGHT THE OFFENSIVE TO TO OUR HOME GROUND!
YOU ALL REMEMBER WHAT THE CIA DID TO JIM JONES IN GUYANA--WELL NOW, BRETHREN, THEY ARE AFTER YOU AND ME!
THE CIRCLE OF THE DRAGON HAS FOUGHT LONG AND HARD AGAINST THE FORCES OF OPPRESSION, AND NOW WE ARE THREATENED DIRECTLY!
SHALL WE BACK DOWN TO THE FORCES OF EVIL?
NO!
NO! NO!
NO! WE SHALL NOT BACK DOWN! WE WILL FIGHT! WE WILL STRIKE BACK!
THE KLAN MUST DIE! THE PANTHER MUST DIE! WE WILL EXTERMINATE OUR ENEMIES AT ANY COST!
EXCUSE ME, REVEREND--THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO ASK ABOUT-- THE COST! I THOUGHT WE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE NONVIOLENT...
WHO IS THAT? WHO DARES QUESTION?
GRAB HIM! HE MUST BE AN IMPOSTOR!

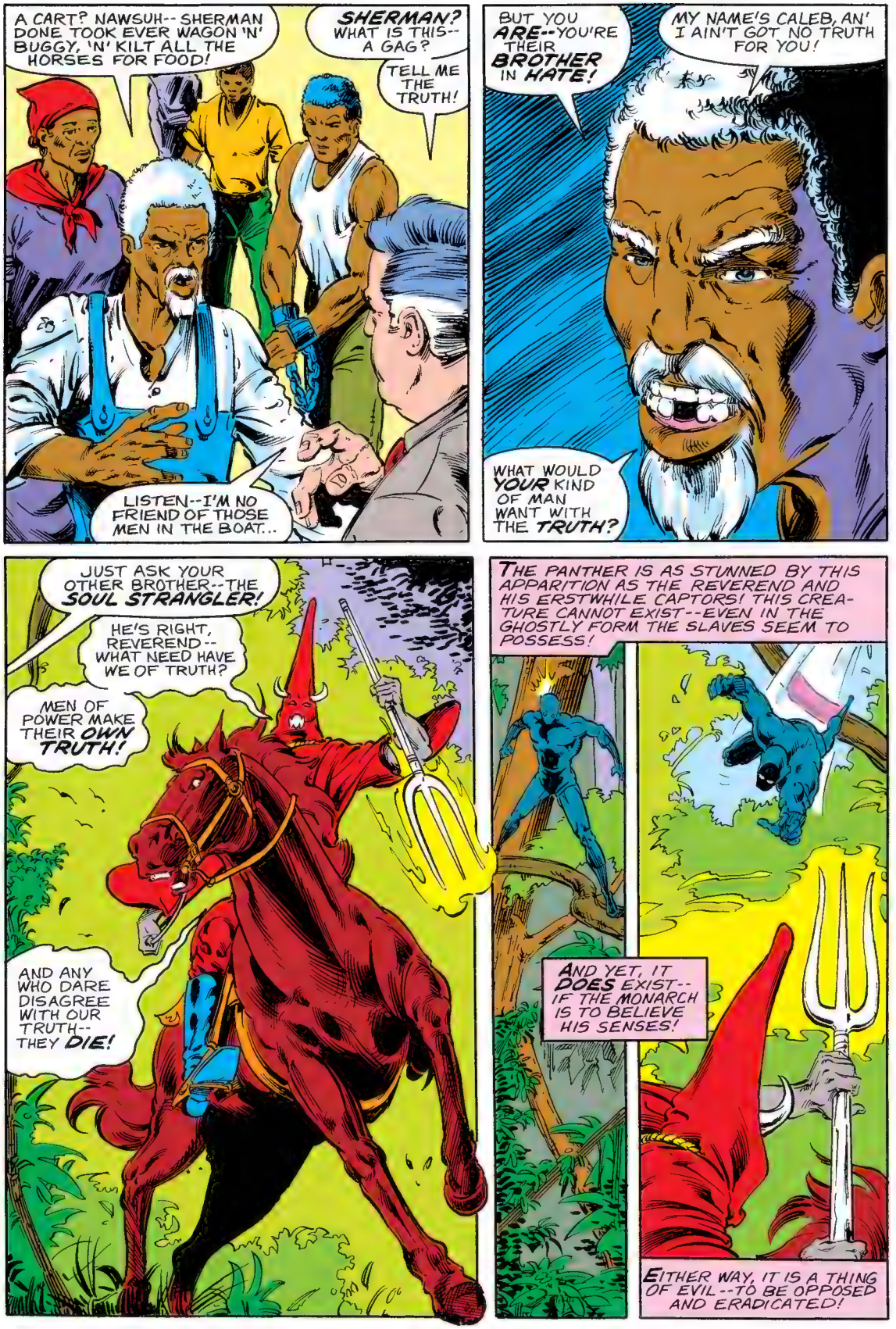

NO! I AIN'T NO IMPOSTER! I BEEN WITH THE CIRCLE FOR YEARS-- AND IT WAS ALWAYS SO PEACEFUL AND NICE BEFORE!
'TIL JUST LATELY!
IT'S LYNNE, THE OLD FOOL!
I THOUGHT WE WAS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE-- NOW IT SEEMS LIKE YOU JUST BEEN FOOLIN' US! I THOUGHT YOU SAID VIOLENCE WAS EVIL.
SO I DID, BROTHER LYNNE... BUT TIMES CHANGE! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK, AND MUST PRESERVE WHAT IS OURS!
SURELY YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I UNDERSTAND. I BEEN HEARIN' A LOT OF RUMORS...
LIES, BROTHER, LIES!
AN' YOU BEEN TALKIN' AGAINST THE PANTHER--AN' I KNOW HE'S A GOOD MAN!
ANYWAY, I'M TOO OLD TO DO MUCH FIGHTIN'...
VERY WELL, BROTHER--
--IF YOU PREFER TO BELIEVE THE LIES OF OUR ENEMIES...
...GO! GO BACK TO THE ONES WHO MURDERED YOUR DAUGHTER! THE DRAGON CIRCLE HOLDS NO ONE AGAINST HIS WILL!
YOUR OWN CONSCIENCE WILL PUNISH YOU!
ME AN' MY BIG MOUTH!
THE PANTHER MUSTA BEEN RIGHT ABOUT THE CULT! I WAS A FOOL TO LISTEN TO THE REVEREND!
HE TOLD ME THE KLAN KILLED ANGELA--BUT I'LL BET THE DRAGON CIRCLE DID!
SUDDENLY..
WHAT? WHO'S THERE?!
HURTLING THROUGH THE AIR LIKE A FELINE GUIDED MISSILE...

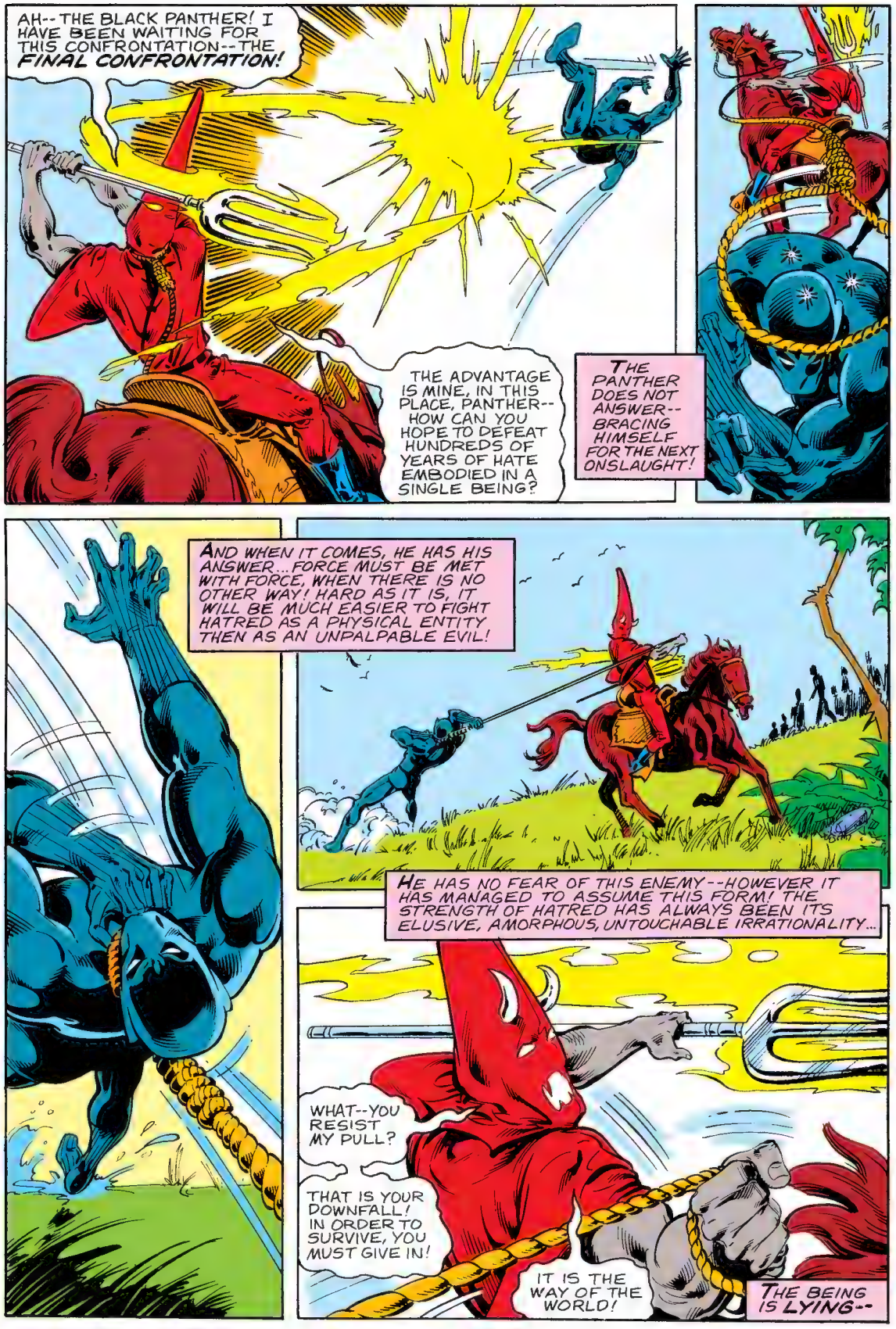
...THE PANTHER FINDS HIS MARK A FRACTION OF A SECOND BEFORE ANOTHER MISSILE MISSES ITS TARGET!
CHUNK
WITHOUT A WORD, THE JUNGLE KING WHIRLS...
...TO FACE TWIN ASSASSINS!
A MATCH, CERTAINLY, FOR AN OLD MAN WITHOUT DEFENSES--
--BUT LESS THAN AN ANNOYANCE TO ONE WITH THE BATTLE SKILLS OF THE AFRICAN MONARCH!
SILENTLY, SWIFTLY, BEFORE IT CAN BEGIN...
...THE CONFLICT ENDS!
AND THE PANTHER STALKS FREELY A JUNGLE NOT UNLIKE THAT OF HIS HOME COUNTRY...

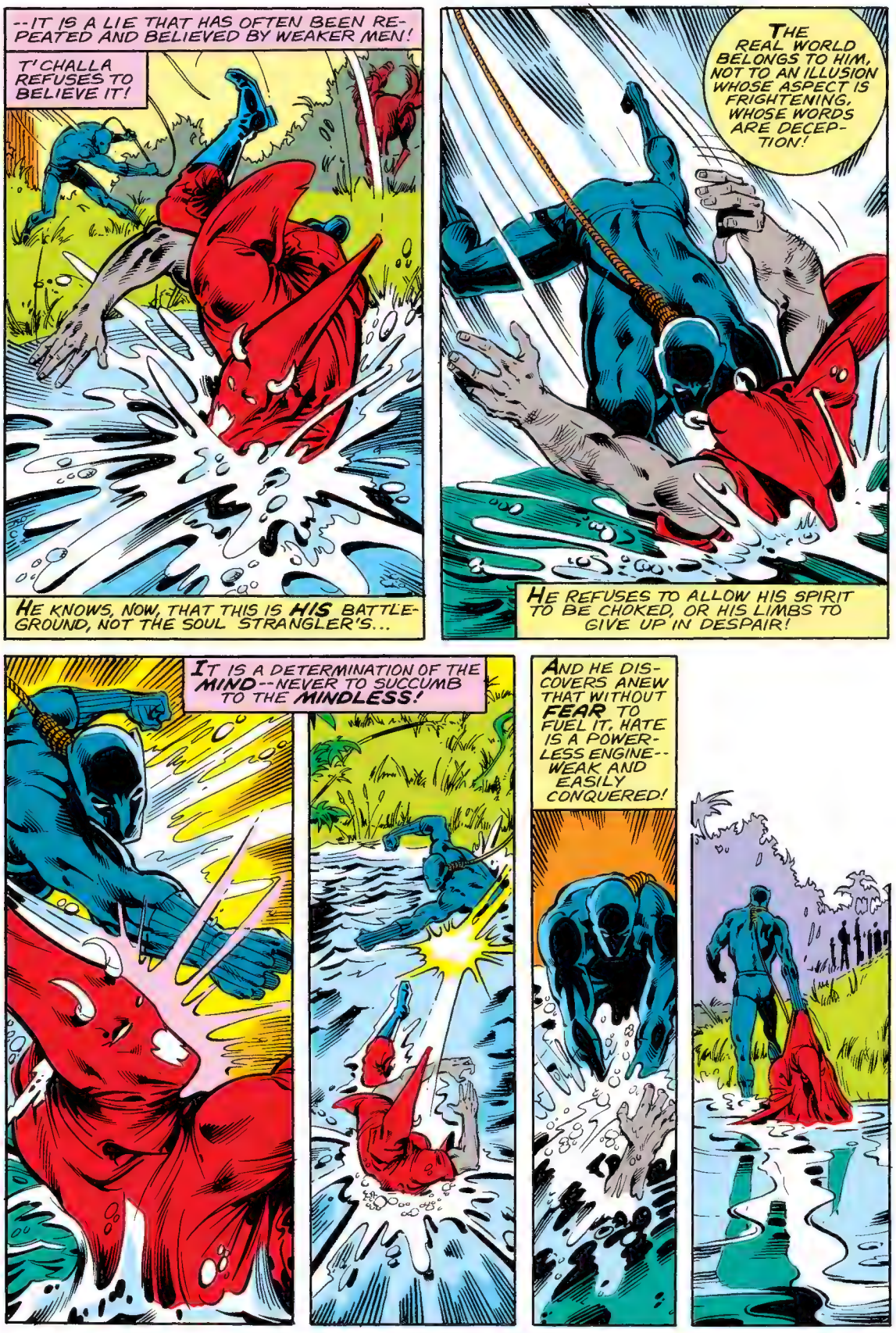
...A JUNGLE THAT HOLDS ITS SHARE OF BEAUTY AND DANGER, DIFFERENT QUALITIES OFTEN EMBODIED IN THE SAME CREATURE...
...THE PANTHER HIMSELF SYMBOLIZING THE HIGHEST EXPRESSION OF BOTH--THE RULER AND TAMER OF THE WILD UNKNOWN!
HE STROLLS CASUALLY THROUGH THE VERDANT LUSHNESS, UNTIL HE HEARS THE CRY HE HAS BEEN WAITING FOR...
...THEN HIS CASUAL GAIT TURNS INTO A RUN, AND AT THE END OF IT...
...HE SEES ANOTHER SIGHT COMMON TO THE RAIN FOREST OF HIS HOME--JACKALS SURROUNDING NOT YET DEAD CARRION!
THE REVEREND'S CULT HAS FLED, LEAVING HIM TO HIS FATE!
NOW, WAIT, BOYS--DON'T DO ANYTHING HASTY! I'M SURE WE CAN WORK OUT SOME KINDA DEAL!
FORGET IT, YOU NIGRA LOVIN' CARPETBAGGER! YOU BEEN CUTTIN' US UP TOO LONG FOR US TO BE FRIENDS NOW!
WE GOT OUR PRINCIPLES!
THEY'S JUST SO MUCH LOOT TO GO AROUND--AN' WE WANT IT ALL!
'COURSE WE WOULDA PREFERRED TO TAKE CARE OF THIS IN A LESS DRASTIC MANNER...BUT YOU HADDA FORCE OUR HAND--CAUSIN' PUBLICITY AN' TALK!
NOW WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO GIVE YOU A NICE, DECENT BAYOU FUNERAL!
NO! NO!


I GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, REV-- YOU GAVE US SOME PRETTY ROUGH MOMENTS-- WE LIKE A LITTLE COMPETITION! BUT NOT TOO MUCH, YOU UNDERSTAND!
I GUESS THE FINAL STRAW WAS GETTIN' THAT PANTHER TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK!
THE PANTHER? WE NEVER HAD HIM ON OUR SIDE! WE TRIED TO BRAINWASH HIM, BUT WE COULDN'T BREAK HIM-- WE HAD TO SETTLE FOR MAKIN' HIM FORGET THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE!
"TOO LATE TO TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF IT NOW, REV--ANYWAY, YOU SHOULD BE PROUD! THE PANTHER WAS YOUR BEST FIGHTER!"
LISTEN BOYS, YOU DON'T HAVE TO KILL ME! I'LL JOIN YOU!
NO THANKS, REV--
--WE PREFER THE TRIED AND TRUE METHODS! BEEN WORKIN' PRETTY GOOD LATELY, TOO, IF YOU HAVE BEEN READING THE PAPERS!
HEY-- WHERE'D THIS BLASTED FOG COME FROM? I CAN'T SEE A THING!
GET US OUTTA HERE!
I-I CAN'T! I DON'T KNOW WHERE WE ARE!
I THOUGHT I KNEW THIS SWAMP-- BUT I DON'T RECOGNIZE THIS SECTION! I NEVER SEEN A FOG LIKE THIS BEFORE!
DON'T SAY THAT! PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO GET LOST IN THIS BAYOU, AND NEVER COME OUT!

BOYS--I KNOW THE WAY OUT!
I'LL SHOW YOU, OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MY HEART--PROVIDIN' YOU PROMISE NOT TO SHOOT ME WHEN WE GET THERE!
ANYTHING! THIS FOG'S DRIVIN' ME CRAZY!
ALRIGHT--STRAIGHT AHEAD, THERE'S AN OLD RUN-DOWN PLANTATION ABOUT A HUNDRED YARDS TO THE LEFT! THERE'S A HIGHWAY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF IT!
THERE--SEE!
YEAH, I SEE IT--BUT IT DON'T LOOK SO RUN-DOWN!
I THINK THIS IS ONE OF YOUR TRICKS!
NONSENSE! THERE ISN'T ANYBODY HERE, BUT--
GLORY BE!
COMIN' OUTTA THOSE SHACKS--THEY LOOK LIKE SLAVES FROM THE DAYS OF OLD!
DAMN I KNEW WE COULDN'T TRUST HIM!
"WE SHOULDA SHOT HIM WHILE WE HAD THE CHANCE!"
AIN'T NONE OF MY DOIN', BOYS! BUT WE'RE SAVED!
HEY--ANY OF YOU FOLKS GOT A CAR WE CAN BORROW?


A CART? NAWSUH-- SHERMAN DONE TOOK EVER WAGON 'N' BUGGY, 'N' KILT ALL THE HORSES FOR FOOD!
SHERMAN? WHAT IS THIS-- A GAG?
TELL ME THE TRUTH!
LISTEN--I'M NO FRIEND OF THOSE MEN IN THE BOAT...
BUT YOU ARE--YOU'RE THEIR BROTHER IN HATE!
MY NAME'S CALEB, AN' I AIN'T GOT NO TRUTH FOR YOU!
WHAT WOULD YOUR KIND OF MAN WANT WITH THE TRUTH?
JUST ASK YOUR OTHER BROTHER--THE SOUL STRANGLER!
HE'S RIGHT, REVEREND-- WHAT NEED HAVE WE OF TRUTH?
MEN OF POWER MAKE THEIR OWN TRUTH!
AND ANY WHO DARE DISAGREE WITH OUR TRUTH-- THEY DIE!
THE PANTHER IS AS STUNNED BY THIS APPARITION AS THE REVEREND AND HIS ERSTWHILE CAPTORS! THIS CREATURE CANNOT EXIST--EVEN IN THE GHOSTLY FORM THE SLAVES SEEM TO POSSESS!
AND YET, IT DOES EXIST-- IF THE MONARCH IS TO BELIEVE HIS SENSES!
EITHER WAY, IT IS A THING OF EVIL--TO BE OPPOSED AND ERADICATED!


AH--THE BLACK PANTHER! I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS CONFRONTATION--THE FINAL CONFRONTATION!
THE ADVANTAGE IS MINE, IN THIS PLACE, PANTHER--HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO DEFEAT HUNDREDS OF YEARS OF HATE EMBODIED IN A SINGLE BEING?
THE PANTHER DOES NOT ANSWER--BRACING HIMSELF FOR THE NEXT ONSLAUGHT!
AND WHEN IT COMES, HE HAS HIS ANSWER...FORCE MUST BE MET WITH FORCE, WHEN THERE IS NO OTHER WAY! HARD AS IT IS, IT WILL BE MUCH EASIER TO FIGHT HATRED AS A PHYSICAL ENTITY THEN AS AN UNPALPABLE EVIL!
HE HAS NO FEAR OF THIS ENEMY--HOWEVER IT HAS MANAGED TO ASSUME THIS FORM! THE STRENGTH OF HATRED HAS ALWAYS BEEN ITS ELUSIVE, AMORPHOUS, UNTOUCHABLE IRRATIONALITY...
WHAT--YOU RESIST MY PULL?
THAT IS YOUR DOWNFALL! IN ORDER TO SURVIVE, YOU MUST GIVE IN!
IT IS THE WAY OF THE WORLD!
THE BEING IS LYING--


--IT IS A LIE THAT HAS OFTEN BEEN REPEATED AND BELIEVED BY WEAKER MEN!
T'CHALLA REFUSES TO BELIEVE IT!
HE KNOWS, NOW, THAT THIS IS HIS BATTLE-GROUND, NOT THE SOUL STRANGLER'S...
THE REAL WORLD BELONGS TO HIM, NOT TO AN ILLUSION WHOSE ASPECT IS FRIGHTENING, WHOSE WORDS ARE DECEPTION!
HE REFUSES TO ALLOW HIS SPIRIT TO BE CHOKED, OR HIS LIMBS TO GIVE UP IN DESPAIR!
IT IS A DETERMINATION OF THE MIND--NEVER TO SUCCUMB TO THE MINDLESS!
AND HE DISCOVERS ANEW THAT WITHOUT FEAR TO FUEL IT, HATE IS A POWERLESS ENGINE--WEAK AND EASILY CONQUERED!

THE ENEMY IS DEFEATED-- BUT THERE ARE STILL QUESTIONS THAT DEMAND ANSWERS...
THE SOUL STRANGLER WAS A LEGEND--AND PARTLY A CREATION OF MONICA LYNNE'S CHILD-HOOD FEARS! HOW THEN...
BUT THE VANQUISHED BEING IS DISSOLVING!
GONE! WAS IT BUT A PHANTASM, A LEFT OVER REACTION TO THE CULT'S BRAINWASHING?
THE PANTHER KNOWS BETTER. THE HATE HAS MERELY REVERTED TO ITS OLD FORM, AND STILL HOLDS SWAY OVER THE PART OF THE WORLD THAT LIVES BY FEAR INSTEAD OF THOUGHT...
THE SLAVES, TOO BEGIN TO VAN-ISH, AS IF IN RESPONSE TO THE UNSPOKEN THOUGHTS OF THE JUNGLE AVENGER...
...WHO STANDS MESMERIZED FOR A SECOND--
--AND THEN IS BROUGHT BACK TO REALITY BY THE SOUND OF ANGRY VOICES...
BUT WE HAD A DEAL! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! OBEY ME!
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU PULLED OFF THAT STUNT, REV--
--BUT YOUR COMMANDIN' DAYS ARE OVER, AND NO GHOSTS CAN SAVE YOU NOW!
HEWITT-- WAIT! NOT ALL OF THE GHOSTS ARE GONE!
I AM NO GHOST!
AND YOU ARE GOING TO DROP THAT WEAPON! NOW!
Y-YES!
WHY, MR. PANTHER --I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T LET THEM KILL ME! I'D SURE LIKE TO THANK YOU--
AND I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU, REVEREND...
KRUMP!

RAPIDLY RESPONDING TO THE PANTHER'S RADIO MESSAGE, TAKU, MONICA, KEVIN, AND SHERRIFF TATE ARRIVE--

WELL, T'CHALLA--I'M MUCH OBLIGED--

ALL THREE OF THESE GENTS GOT QUITE A LOT OF CONFESSIN' TO DO, AN' THEY SEEM PRETTY EAGER TO DO IT! SOMETHIN' SURE PUT THE FEAR INTO THEM!

INDEED--WHATEVER THEY ***THINK*** THEY SAW GAVE THEM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON THINGS!

I ADVISE YOU TO ORDER YOUR MEN TO COMB THIS AREA FOR LOST CULTISTS AND KLANSMEN--

OH, T'CHALLA--IT'S OVER!

MY FATHER TOLD ME THE WHOLE STORY! THE CULT IS FALLING APART, AND SOME OF THEM ARE PROMISING TO TESTIFY AGAINST ANGELA'S KILLERS!

YES. THE CULT HAD AS MUCH TO LOSE AS THE KLAN IF ANGELA EXPOSED THE CROOKED REAL ESTATE DEALS, SO THEY ***MURDERED*** HER! NOW YOU AND YOUR FUTURE HUSBAND CAN STOP FEARING, AND FACE THE FUTURE! CONGRATULATIONS.

THAT SOUNDS LIKE A ROYAL BLESSING TO ME, KEVIN.

AND I APPRECIATE IT, TAKU--BUT THERE IS ONE THING THAT REMAINS TO BE DONE--BY ME, AS A REPORTER!

"TO FINALLY GET THE TRUTH ON RECORD!"

GEORGIA SUN

VOL. 20

CULT LEADER INDICT

MURDER CHARGED TO RELIGIOUS FIGURE

WELL KNOWN CULT LEADER ESCORTED TO STATE PRISON.

WAKANDAN CHIEF EXPOSES KILLERS

EX-AVEN

AS FOR THE GHOSTS IN THE SWAMP--T'CHALLA DOES NOT ***KNOW*** WHAT THEY WERE. SUCH THINGS ARE NOT TREATED SKEPTICALLY IN HIS NATIVE WAKANDA... THEY ARE CONSIDERED, LIKE LIFE AND JUSTICE, TO BE BUT ANOTHER PART OF ***NATURE!***

END.

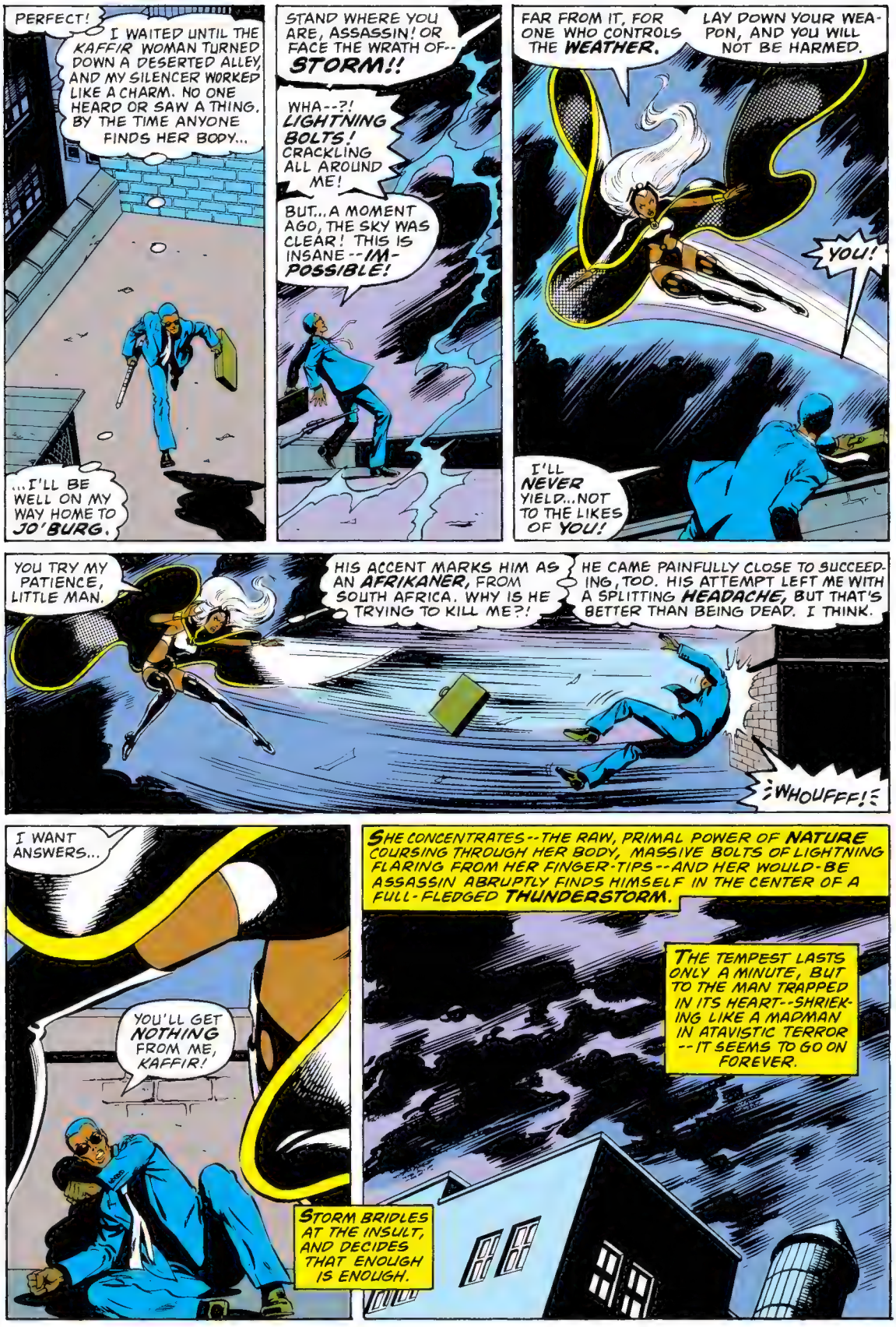
NEXT AN ALL-NEW WESTERN SUPER-STAR... ★ CALEB HAMMER ★ DON'T MISS IT!

SPECIAL BONUS: The Black Panther and Storm meet for the first time in this backup feature from *Marvel Team-Up* #100 (Dec. 1980)

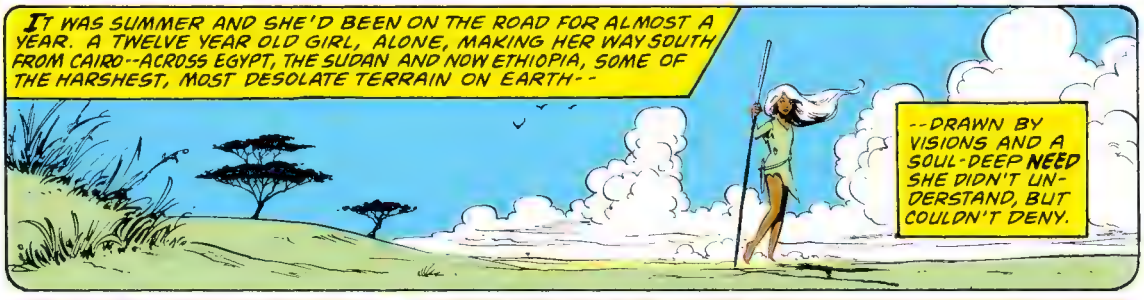
Stan Lee PRESENTS: STORM AND THE BLACK PANTHER

CHRIS CLAREMONT, JOHN BYRNE & BOB McLEOD / A. KAWECKI / ROBBIE C. / DENNY O'NEIL / JIM SHOOTER
WRITER * CO-PLOTTERS * ARTISTS / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

SHE WAS BORN ORORO MONROE, DAUGHTER OF AN AMERICAN PHOTOJOURNALIST AND AN AFRICAN PRINCESS. ORPHANED AT AGE SIX, SHE SPENT THE REST OF HER CHILDHOOD AS A CAIRO STREET URCHIN BEFORE FATE DREW HER SOUTH TO HER ANCESTRAL HOMELAND...
...AND TRANSFORMED HER INTO BOTH GODDESS AND LEGEND.
THAT WAS LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY. NOW, SHE HAS RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES, THE LAND OF HER BIRTH...
R10112+0
...AS A MEMBER OF A TEAM OF MUTANT SUPER-HEROES, THE UNCANNY X-MEN!
SHE'S LIVED AN EXCITING LIFE--EVEN BEFORE SHE JOINED THE X-MEN--AND MADE MORE THAN HER SHARE OF ENEMIES.
SO IT'S NOT ALL THAT SURPRISING...
...WHEN ONE OF THEM TRIES TO KILL HER!
CRY--VENGEANCE!
ARRRGH!!


PERFECT!
I WAITED UNTIL THE KAFFIR WOMAN TURNED DOWN A DESERTED ALLEY, AND MY SILENCER WORKED LIKE A CHARM. NO ONE HEARD OR SAW A THING. BY THE TIME ANYONE FINDS HER BODY...
...I'LL BE WELL ON MY WAY HOME TO JO'BURG.
STAND WHERE YOU ARE, ASSASSIN! OR FACE THE WRATH OF-- STORM!!
WHA--?! LIGHTNING BOLTS! CRACKLING ALL AROUND ME!
BUT...A MOMENT AGO, THE SKY WAS CLEAR! THIS IS INSANE--IM-POSSIBLE!
FAR FROM IT, FOR ONE WHO CONTROLS THE WEATHER.
LAY DOWN YOUR WEAPON, AND YOU WILL NOT BE HARMED.
YOU!
I'LL NEVER YIELD...NOT TO THE LIKES OF YOU!
YOU TRY MY PATIENCE, LITTLE MAN.
HIS ACCENT MARKS HIM AS AN AFRIKANER, FROM SOUTH AFRICA. WHY IS HE TRYING TO KILL ME?!
HE CAME PAINFULLY CLOSE TO SUCCEEDING, TOO. HIS ATTEMPT LEFT ME WITH A SPLITTING HEADACHE, BUT THAT'S BETTER THAN BEING DEAD. I THINK.
WHOUFFF!
I WANT ANSWERS...
YOU'LL GET NOTHING FROM ME, KAFFIR!
STORM BRIDLES AT THE INSULT, AND DECIDES THAT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.
SHE CONCENTRATES--THE RAW, PRIMAL POWER OF NATURE COURSING THROUGH HER BODY, MASSIVE BOLTS OF LIGHTNING FLARING FROM HER FINGER-TIPS--AND HER WOULD-BE ASSASSIN ABRUPTLY FINDS HIMSELF IN THE CENTER OF A FULL-FLEDGED THUNDERSTORM.
THE TEMPEST LASTS ONLY A MINUTE, BUT TO THE MAN TRAPPED IN ITS HEART--SHRIEKING LIKE A MADMAN IN ATAVISTIC TERROR --IT SEEMS TO GO ON FOREVER.

AND WHEN IT'S OVER...
THAT IS A SAMPLE OF WHAT I CAN DO. THINGS CAN GET MUCH, MUCH WORSE--AND WILL, UNLESS YOU TELL ME WHAT I WANT TO KNOW.
WHO SENT YOU?!
N-NO MORE. P-PLEASE, I BEG YOU I'LL TALK. I'LL...TALK.
I WAS HIRED BY... ANDREAS DE RUYTER.
AT THE NAME, STORM'S BREATH HISSES BETWEEN SUDDENLY CLENCHED TEETH, AND HER FACE TURNS GRIM AS MEMORIES SURGE, UNBIDDEN, ACROSS HER MIND'S-EYE...

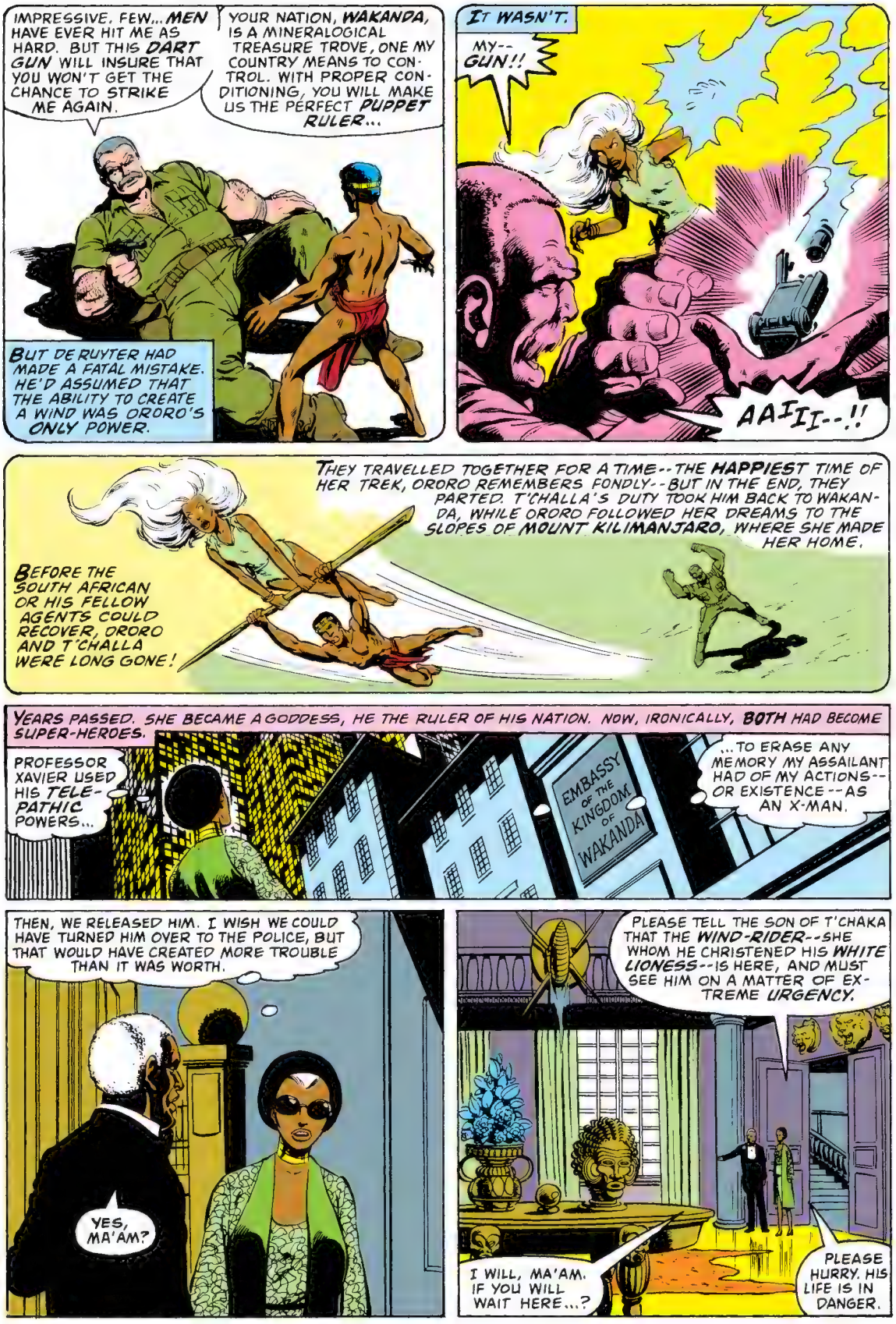

IT WAS SUMMER AND SHE'D BEEN ON THE ROAD FOR ALMOST A YEAR. A TWELVE YEAR OLD GIRL, ALONE, MAKING HER WAY SOUTH FROM CAIRO--ACROSS EGYPT, THE SUDAN AND NOW ETHIOPIA, SOME OF THE HARSHEST, MOST DESOLATE TERRAIN ON EARTH--
--DRAWN BY VISIONS AND A SOUL-DEEP NEED SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND, BUT COULDN'T DENY.

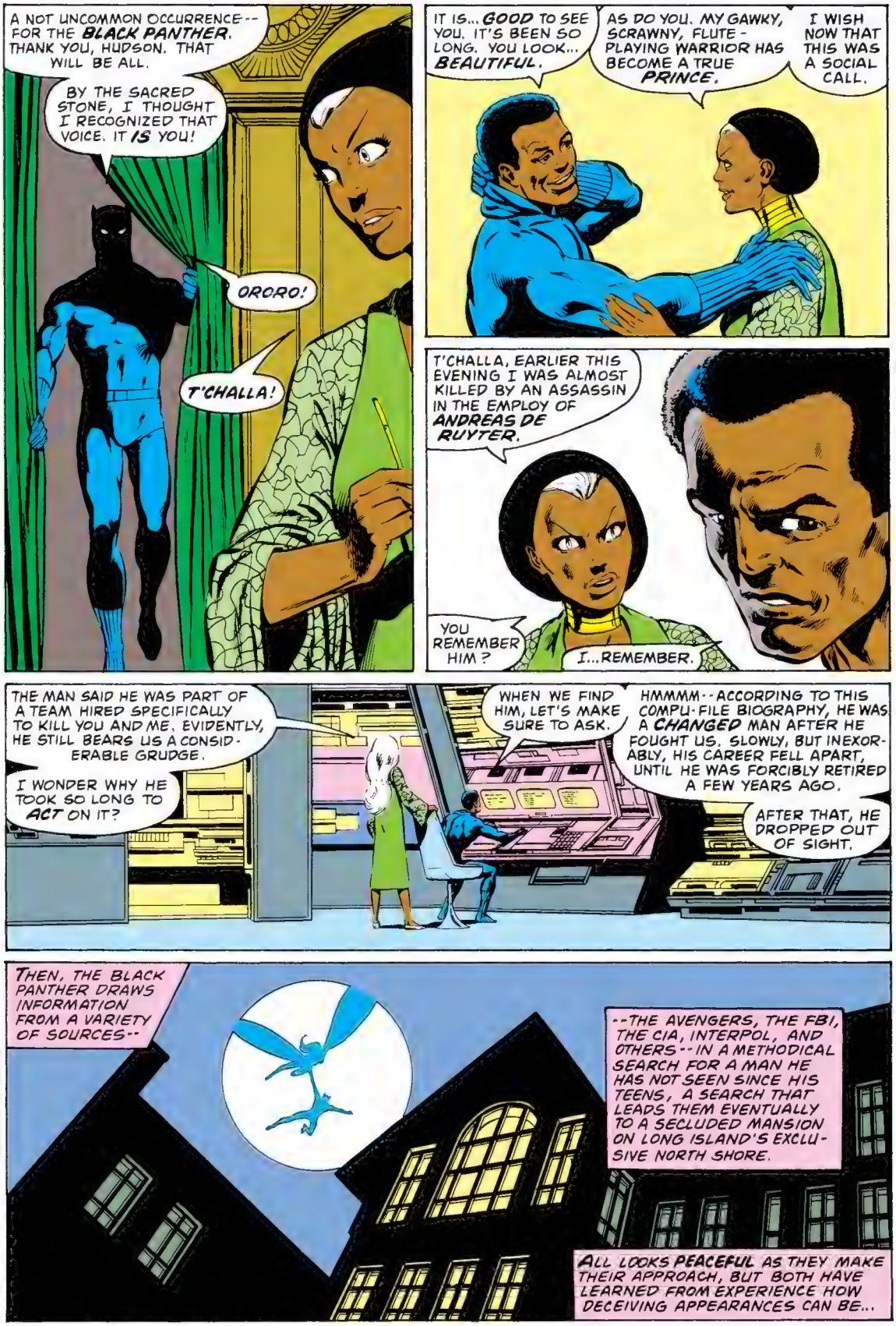
SHE WAS NEARING LAKE RUDOLPH, IN KENYA, THE DAY SHE MET ANDREAS DE RUYTER, OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU OF STATE SECURITY. HIM, AND ONE OTHER...
WHAT'S THAT--?!
A GUN-SHOT! AND THE SOUND OF MEN FIGHTING!

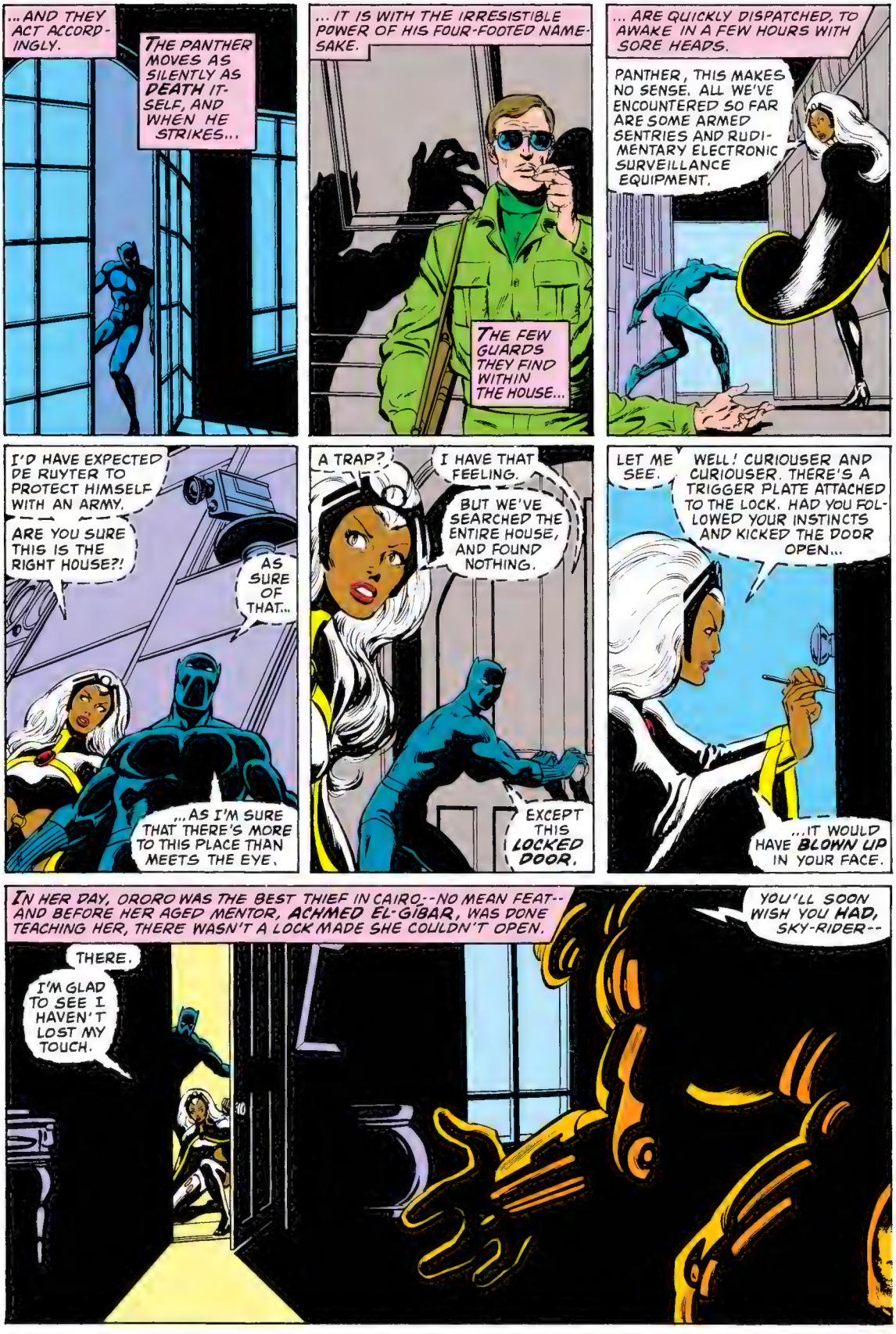
COMMON SENSE DICTATED THAT SHE HEAD THE OTHER WAY, FAST! BUT, NOT SURPRISINGLY, A TEEN-AGER'S NATURAL CURIOUSITY GOT THE BETTER OF HER.
A YOUNG BLACK MAN--HE CAN'T BE THAT MUCH OLDER THAN ME--BEING ATTACKED BY A GANG OF WHITES!
ARE THEY POLICE? OR SLAVERS?

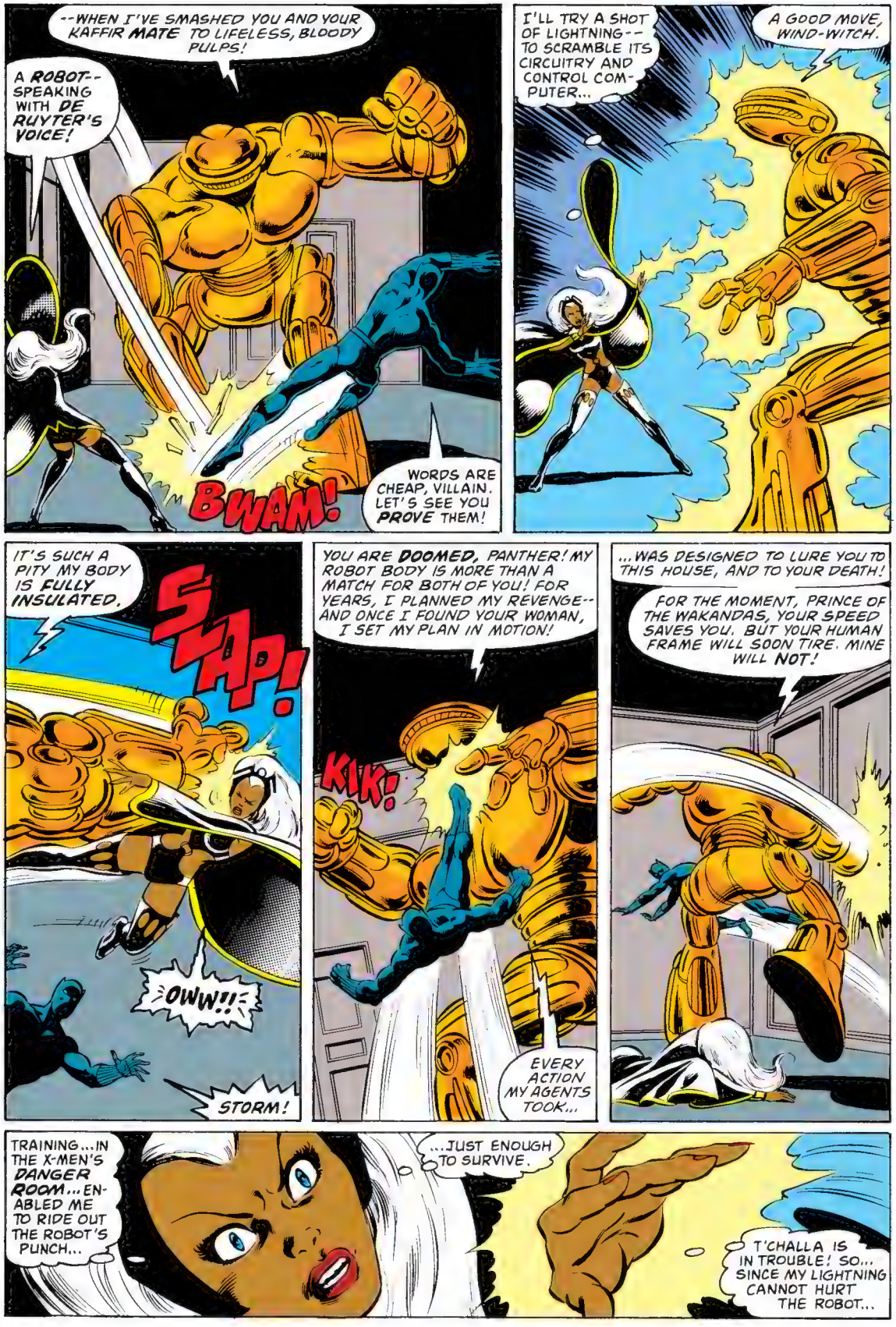
I DON'T KNOW--AND I DON'T CARE! THAT BOY NEEDS HELP--
--AND I'M GOING TO GIVE IT TO HIM!
CALLING ON TALENTS SHE'D ONLY RECENTLY LEARNED SHE POSSESSED, ORORO SUMMONS A WIND TO GATHER HER UP.
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE YOUNG MUTANT--FLIES!

SHE STRIKES LIKE AN EAGLE, FLATTENING EVERYONE BUT THE BLACK WARRIOR WITH HURRICANE-FORCE BLASTS OF AIR. BEFORE THE MEN ARE EVEN AWARE THEY'RE UNDER ATTACK...
...MOST OF THEM ARE UNCONSCIOUS, AND THE REST TOO DAZED TO GIVE ORORO ANY REAL TROUBLE.
WHAT--?!?
DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES--TO BOTH QUESTIONS. BUT... WHO ARE YOU?! HOW DID YOU DO THIS, HOW DO YOU FLY--?!
I AM ORORO...
WARRIOR-- BEHIND YOU! THAT TRUCK--!
GIRL, YOUR INTERFERENCE WILL COST YOU DEAR!
YOUR WIND POWERS ARE AS IMPRESSIVE AS THEY ARE STRANGE, BUT IT WILL TAKE FAR MORE THAN A MERE WIND, NO MATTER HOW STRONG, TO STOP DE RUYTER THE BULL!
MY MASTERS WISH TO SEE PRINCE T'CHALLA SAFE AND SOUND IN PRETORIA, AS THE PERMANENT "GUEST" OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA...
...AND I INTEND TO SEE THAT THEIR WISH IS GRANTED!
POW!
UNNNGNH!
KRAK!
IN A WORD, BUTCHER--
--NEVER!

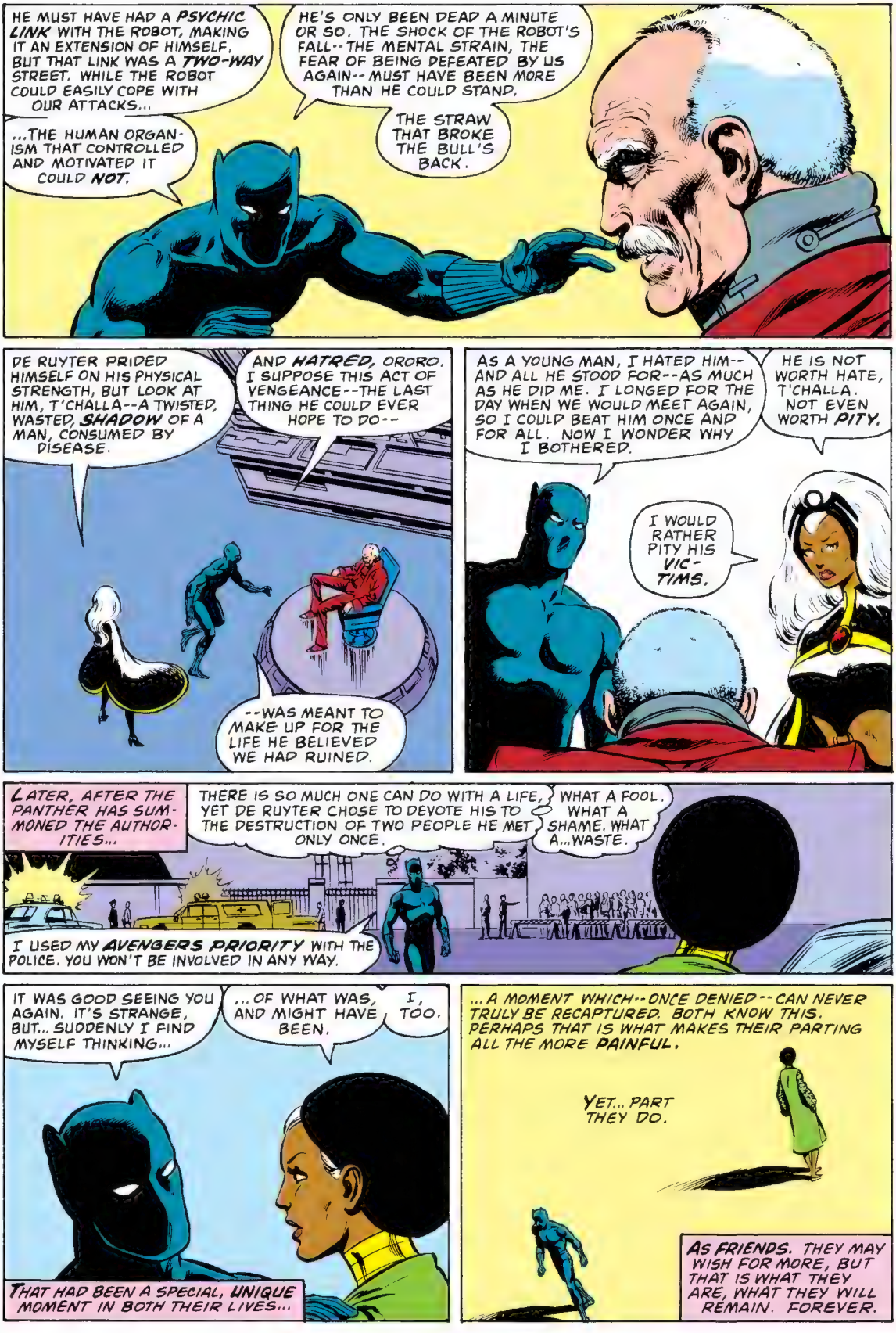

IMPRESSIVE, FEW... MEN HAVE EVER HIT ME AS HARD. BUT THIS DART GUN WILL INSURE THAT YOU WON'T GET THE CHANCE TO STRIKE ME AGAIN.
YOUR NATION, WAKANDA, IS A MINERALOGICAL TREASURE TROVE, ONE MY COUNTRY MEANS TO CONTROL. WITH PROPER CONDITIONING, YOU WILL MAKE US THE PERFECT PUPPET RULER...
BUT DE RUYTER HAD MADE A FATAL MISTAKE. HE'D ASSUMED THAT THE ABILITY TO CREATE A WIND WAS ORORO'S ONLY POWER.
IT WASN'T.
MY-- GUN!!
AAIII--!!
BEFORE THE SOUTH AFRICAN OR HIS FELLOW AGENTS COULD RECOVER, ORORO AND T'CHALLA WERE LONG GONE!
THEY TRAVELLED TOGETHER FOR A TIME--THE HAPPIEST TIME OF HER TREK, ORORO REMEMBERS FONDLY--BUT IN THE END, THEY PARTED. T'CHALLA'S DUTY TOOK HIM BACK TO WAKANDA, WHILE ORORO FOLLOWED HER DREAMS TO THE SLOPES OF MOUNT KILIMANJARO, WHERE SHE MADE HER HOME.
YEARS PASSED. SHE BECAME A GODDESS, HE THE RULER OF HIS NATION. NOW, IRONICALLY, BOTH HAD BECOME SUPER-HEROES.
PROFESSOR XAVIER USED HIS TELEPATHIC POWERS...
EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF WAKANDA
...TO ERASE ANY MEMORY MY ASSAILANT HAD OF MY ACTIONS--OR EXISTENCE--AS AN X-MAN.
THEN, WE RELEASED HIM. I WISH WE COULD HAVE TURNED HIM OVER TO THE POLICE, BUT THAT WOULD HAVE CREATED MORE TROUBLE THAN IT WAS WORTH.
YES, MA'AM?
PLEASE TELL THE SON OF T'CHAKA THAT THE WIND-RIDER--SHE WHOM HE CHRISTENED HIS WHITE LIONESS--IS HERE, AND MUST SEE HIM ON A MATTER OF EXTREME URGENCY.
I WILL, MA'AM. IF YOU WILL WAIT HERE...?
PLEASE HURRY. HIS LIFE IS IN DANGER.


A NOT UNCOMMON OCCURRENCE -- FOR THE BLACK PANTHER. THANK YOU, HUDSON. THAT WILL BE ALL.
BY THE SACRED STONE, I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED THAT VOICE. IT IS YOU!
ORORO!
T'CHALLA!
IT IS... GOOD TO SEE YOU. IT'S BEEN SO LONG. YOU LOOK... BEAUTIFUL.
AS DO YOU. MY GAWKY, SCRAWNY, FLUTE-PLAYING WARRIOR HAS BECOME A TRUE PRINCE.
I WISH NOW THAT THIS WAS A SOCIAL CALL.
T'CHALLA, EARLIER THIS EVENING I WAS ALMOST KILLED BY AN ASSASSIN IN THE EMPLOY OF ANDREAS DE RUYTER.
YOU REMEMBER HIM?
I... REMEMBER.
THE MAN SAID HE WAS PART OF A TEAM HIRED SPECIFICALLY TO KILL YOU AND ME. EVIDENTLY, HE STILL BEARS US A CONSIDERABLE GRUDGE.
I WONDER WHY HE TOOK SO LONG TO ACT ON IT?
WHEN WE FIND HIM, LET'S MAKE SURE TO ASK.
HMMMM -- ACCORDING TO THIS COMPU-FILE BIOGRAPHY, HE WAS A CHANGED MAN AFTER HE FOUGHT US. SLOWLY, BUT INEXORABLY, HIS CAREER FELL APART, UNTIL HE WAS FORCIBLY RETIRED A FEW YEARS AGO.
AFTER THAT, HE DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT.
THEN, THE BLACK PANTHER DRAWS INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES --
--THE AVENGERS, THE FBI, THE CIA, INTERPOL, AND OTHERS -- IN A METHODICAL SEARCH FOR A MAN HE HAS NOT SEEN SINCE HIS TEENS, A SEARCH THAT LEADS THEM EVENTUALLY TO A SECLUDED MANSION ON LONG ISLAND'S EXCLUSIVE NORTH SHORE.
ALL LOOKS PEACEFUL AS THEY MAKE THEIR APPROACH, BUT BOTH HAVE LEARNED FROM EXPERIENCE HOW DECEIVING APPEARANCES CAN BE...


...AND THEY ACT ACCORDINGLY.
THE PANTHER MOVES AS SILENTLY AS DEATH ITSELF, AND WHEN HE STRIKES...
...IT IS WITH THE IRRESISTIBLE POWER OF HIS FOUR-FOOTED NAMESAKE.
THE FEW GUARDS THEY FIND WITHIN THE HOUSE...
...ARE QUICKLY DISPATCHED, TO AWAKE IN A FEW HOURS WITH SORE HEADS.
PANTHER, THIS MAKES NO SENSE. ALL WE'VE ENCOUNTERED SO FAR ARE SOME ARMED SENTRIES AND RUDIMENTARY ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT.
I'D HAVE EXPECTED DE RUYTER TO PROTECT HIMSELF WITH AN ARMY.
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT HOUSE?!
AS SURE OF THAT...
...AS I'M SURE THAT THERE'S MORE TO THIS PLACE THAN MEETS THE EYE.
A TRAP?
I HAVE THAT FEELING.
BUT WE'VE SEARCHED THE ENTIRE HOUSE, AND FOUND NOTHING.
EXCEPT THIS LOCKED DOOR.
LET ME SEE.
WELL! CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER. THERE'S A TRIGGER PLATE ATTACHED TO THE LOCK. HAD YOU FOLLOWED YOUR INSTINCTS AND KICKED THE DOOR OPEN...
...IT WOULD HAVE BLOWN UP IN YOUR FACE.
IN HER DAY, ORORO WAS THE BEST THIEF IN CAIRO--NO MEAN FEAT--AND BEFORE HER AGED MENTOR, ACHMED EL-GIBAR, WAS DONE TEACHING HER, THERE WASN'T A LOCK MADE SHE COULDN'T OPEN.
YOU'LL SOON WISH YOU HAD, SKY-RIDER--
THERE.
I'M GLAD TO SEE I HAVEN'T LOST MY TOUCH.


--WHEN I'VE SMASHED YOU AND YOUR KAFFIR MATE TO LIFELESS, BLOODY PULPS!
A ROBOT--SPEAKING WITH DE RUYTER'S VOICE!
BWAM!
WORDS ARE CHEAP, VILLAIN. LET'S SEE YOU PROVE THEM!
I'LL TRY A SHOT OF LIGHTNING--TO SCRAMBLE ITS CIRCUITRY AND CONTROL COMPUTER...
A GOOD MOVE, WIND-WITCH.
IT'S SUCH A PITY MY BODY IS FULLY INSULATED.
SLAP!
OWW!!
STORM!
YOU ARE DOOMED, PANTHER! MY ROBOT BODY IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR BOTH OF YOU! FOR YEARS, I PLANNED MY REVENGE--AND ONCE I FOUND YOUR WOMAN, I SET MY PLAN IN MOTION!
KIK!
EVERY ACTION MY AGENTS TOOK...
...WAS DESIGNED TO LURE YOU TO THIS HOUSE, AND TO YOUR DEATH!
FOR THE MOMENT, PRINCE OF THE WAKANDAS, YOUR SPEED SAVES YOU. BUT YOUR HUMAN FRAME WILL SOON TIRE. MINE WILL NOT!
TRAINING...IN THE X-MEN'S DANGER ROOM...ENABLED ME TO RIDE OUT THE ROBOT'S PUNCH...
...JUST ENOUGH TO SURVIVE.
T'CHALLA IS IN TROUBLE! SO... SINCE MY LIGHTNING CANNOT HURT THE ROBOT...

...I THINK MY BEST ALTERNATIVE IS TO STRIKE AT THE FLOOR BENEATH THE ROBOT.
IT WORKED! AT THE VERY LEAST, THAT SHOULD TEMPORARILY IMMOBILIZE HIM.
I--I'M FALLING!
NO! THINGS CAN'T END THIS WAY! I WON'T LET THEM!
ZKOW!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, STORM?
I'VE FELT BETTER--BUT I'VE BEEN HURT WORSE.
IT SOUNDS LIKE THE ROBOT PLUNGED ALL THE WAY TO THE BASEMENT.
WE'D BEST FIND DE RUYTER WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE. I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT I FEAR THAT THING IS MORE THAN WE TWO ALONE CAN HANDLE.
ODD. I CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING. THE ROBOT'S VOICE STOPPED SUDDENLY AFTER IT STRUCK BOTTOM, AND NOW THERE'S NO SIGN OF ANY MOVEMENT.
THIS DOOR APPEARS TO BE THE ONLY OTHER EXIT. AND FROM THE OTHER SIDE--EVEN THROUGH ITS SOUND-PROOFING--
--I CAN HEAR THE SOUND OF COMPUTERS AND SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONICS APPARATUS.
I DOUBT DE RUYTER WOULD BOOBY-TRAP THIS ENTRANCE--TOO MUCH RISK OF A BOMB DAMAGING HIS EQUIPMENT--SO I THINK I'LL TRY A LESS-SUBTLE METHOD THAN YOUR LOCKPICKS TO OPEN IT.
ALL RIGHT, DE RUYTER, YOU WANTED US--WE'RE HERE!
I TRUST YOU'LL BE BETTER AT FIGHTING T'CHALLA THE MAN, THAN YOU WERE AGAINST...
...T'CHALLA THE BOY.
GODDESS! DE RUYTER--HE...
...WON'T BE FIGHTING ANYONE, STORM, EVER AGAIN.


HE MUST HAVE HAD A PSYCHIC LINK WITH THE ROBOT, MAKING IT AN EXTENSION OF HIMSELF, BUT THAT LINK WAS A TWO-WAY STREET. WHILE THE ROBOT COULD EASILY COPE WITH OUR ATTACKS...
...THE HUMAN ORGANISM THAT CONTROLLED AND MOTIVATED IT COULD NOT.
HE'S ONLY BEEN DEAD A MINUTE OR SO. THE SHOCK OF THE ROBOT'S FALL--THE MENTAL STRAIN, THE FEAR OF BEING DEFEATED BY US AGAIN--MUST HAVE BEEN MORE THAN HE COULD STAND.
THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE BULL'S BACK.
DE RUYTER PRIDED HIMSELF ON HIS PHYSICAL STRENGTH, BUT LOOK AT HIM, T'CHALLA--A TWISTED, WASTED, SHADOW OF A MAN, CONSUMED BY DISEASE.
AND HATRED, ORORO. I SUPPOSE THIS ACT OF VENGEANCE--THE LAST THING HE COULD EVER HOPE TO DO--
--WAS MEANT TO MAKE UP FOR THE LIFE HE BELIEVED WE HAD RUINED.
AS A YOUNG MAN, I HATED HIM--AND ALL HE STOOD FOR--AS MUCH AS HE DID ME. I LONGED FOR THE DAY WHEN WE WOULD MEET AGAIN, SO I COULD BEAT HIM ONCE AND FOR ALL. NOW I WONDER WHY I BOTHERED.
HE IS NOT WORTH HATE, T'CHALLA. NOT EVEN WORTH PITY.
I WOULD RATHER PITY HIS VICTIMS.
LATER, AFTER THE PANTHER HAS SUMMONED THE AUTHORITIES...
THERE IS SO MUCH ONE CAN DO WITH A LIFE, YET DE RUYTER CHOSE TO DEVOTE HIS TO THE DESTRUCTION OF TWO PEOPLE HE MET ONLY ONCE.
WHAT A FOOL. WHAT A SHAME. WHAT A...WASTE.
I USED MY AVENGERS PRIORITY WITH THE POLICE. YOU WON'T BE INVOLVED IN ANY WAY.
IT WAS GOOD SEEING YOU AGAIN. IT'S STRANGE, BUT... SUDDENLY I FIND MYSELF THINKING...
...OF WHAT WAS, AND MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
I, TOO.
THAT HAD BEEN A SPECIAL, UNIQUE MOMENT IN BOTH THEIR LIVES...
...A MOMENT WHICH--ONCE DENIED--CAN NEVER TRULY BE RECAPTURED. BOTH KNOW THIS. PERHAPS THAT IS WHAT MAKES THEIR PARTING ALL THE MORE PAINFUL.
YET... PART THEY DO.
AS FRIENDS. THEY MAY WISH FOR MORE, BUT THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE, WHAT THEY WILL REMAIN. FOREVER.

Black Panther #1 editorial
by Jack Kirby

PANTHER POST SCRIPTS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

THE *NEW* BLACK PANTHER---THINGS TO COME

New titles call for new text pages. So here I am, Mrs. Kirby's cantankerous husband, sitting unshaven at a rickety typewriter and trying in my own inimitable manner to convey a few words about the new-yet-familiar figure of the Black Panther. For it is the Panther who must leap and cavort about these pages to earn his new book its entrance fee into the Marvel Super-hero *Grande Armée*!

With one new issue fresh off the drawing board, and another almost on its way at this writing, I can only say that you're due to see the Panther the way he was originally intended to be.

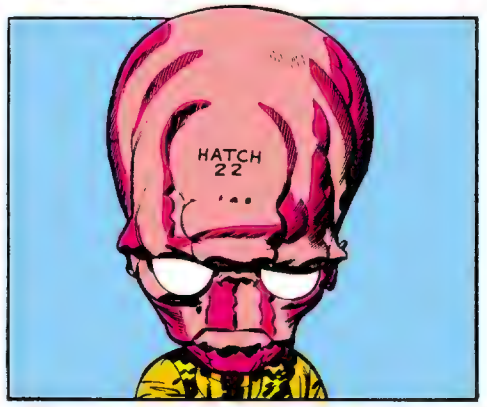
You see, every character of distinction who is created from a singular format must, in my estimation, retain that format in order to survive. Like a living, breathing human being, a comics super-hero must forever be himself in order to fulfill his function—which is primarily to entertain the reader, to sell comic books, and to keep all those connected with his existence from developing the Tasmanian Crud.

So, the Black Panther you will see emerging from these pages is one that will take you to all the exciting, fantastic places your imagination can conjure. And why not?!? That's entertainment, isn't it, folks? You bet!

From now on, you and I are going to swing off into a wide orbit. With the characters and premises introduced in this issue, we've got a ticket on the Universe Express. We'll go anywhere and everywhere, spiralling out into regions we don't even dare guess at. And in this setting, the Black Panther will do our exploring. He will take all the risks, enduring the trials he was created for.

And as for surprises both pleasant and shocking, we have only to look at the supporting cast in this issue to realize that fastening one's seat belt would be advisable. You've seen the mysterious Mister Little (you thought he was dead, didn't you?). And perhaps you're wondering about the identity of Princess Zanda and her power to command a private army. Well, the story behind that will be an eye-opener, I assure you! And, last but far from least, we've introduced a being from man's distant future—Hatch 22—who will give us a frightening look at the variations that lie ahead on our own evolutionary chain.

Now I ask you, dear Marvelite, could you ask for more thrills?



Of course, you could! And you'll be getting them! Mountains and mountains of them! We'll drag you into King Solomon's bizarre burial chamber, and through the fabulous jungle kingdom of Wakanda which spawned the Black Panther. We'll slice more deeply into his amazing ancestry to reveal the true beginnings of the Panther Cult and the intergalactic reasons for its creation. We'll find out what the miracle-metal vibranium *really* is (and you'll be levitated out of your chair at that revelation!).

All of this and more shall flow from the initial proceedings in this very issue. There will be thrills experienced, secrets revealed, and incredible journeys taken into the thought-centers that produce the *boggles* of our minds.

Do the possibilities in all of this intrigue you? I'm staking my best box of cigars that it does. And I'm taking this stand for only one reason: I *like* the Black Panther! He's got the qualities of character that make him as real and thrilling as we want him to be.

And, if we can wander about in his bigger-than-life experiences enough to gain the satisfaction of triumph, perhaps that feeling will stay with us. Who knows, we might even find ourselves winning in the real world! Now, that's *really* worth the price of the book!

--Jack Kirby

Black Panther #6 editorial
by Jack Kirby

THE ROOTS OF T'CHALLA

The Black Panther, fearless in battle and rich of heritage, is basically a creature of action entertainment. And yet, woven into his background are the threads of a fantastic saga—a vast, untapped motherlode of fantasy that rivals any of the classic tales of yesteryear.

Unlike other jungle peoples, T'Challa's Wakandans possess a most unique resource—a huge mound of vibranium, a zealously guarded metal found only in the Panther's African nation. Behind this mystery-enshrouded metal lies a story of men and times that, if slowly and carefully revealed, can provide added detail to the exciting tapestry of the Panther's adventures.

Where *did* the vibranium originate? Who entrusted the Wakandans with its keeping? And, last but not least, how did the line of rulers which fathered T'Challa rise to power? These questions are bound to produce atmosphere and characters hitherto undreamed of in the Panther saga. The trail could well begin out in the cosmos and stretch across time itself to cross the paths which T'Challa trods. Along that trail we could well encounter faces from out of the past, or witness epic battles fought by the Wakandans in the shadows of majestic palaces. There are secrets of the Panther cult that have yet to be unearthed. The possibilities boggle the mind.

And those possibilities are something to save for the moments when all the gangsters, gods, and super-villains are temporarily out of steam and pausing to get their heads together for the next round of chicanery. They are possibilities—wild-eyed concepts and ideas, if you will—for the writer and the reader to flesh out together, communicating with each other from across the printed page and meeting here in the midst of this most Marvelous of Universes.

I, for my part, have already begun a bit of the job. And, as you may have already noticed, my character is neither a Kunta Kinte nor a Chicken George, but he *can* open wide the door to a most interesting area of T'Challa's life.

When the mail gets here, I shall shuffle through your collective brickbats with great curiosity, to see if there have been any similar thoughts among the ranks of Marveldom Assembled. If there are none now, I'm certain that there will be some later on. At any rate, this is the place to sound off. And the new address—note well—is:

Panther Postscripts
P.O. Box 4943
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

And in the meantime, hang in there!

JACK KIRBY-

July 1978 house ad featuring Black Panther

LOOK OUT WORLD--IT'S THE
MIGHTY MARVEL SUPER-HERO EXPLOSION!
FIVE ALL-NEW ACTION BLOCKBUSTERS ON SALE NOW!
THOR
CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON
BLACK PANTHER
THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN
ALL-OUT ACTION AS YOU LIKE IT!
AND WATCH FOR THE ALL-NEW
Ms. MARVEL
NOW MORE THAN EVER--THIS IS THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!

A history of the Black Panther from *Black Panther* #14

PANTHER POST SCRIPTS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

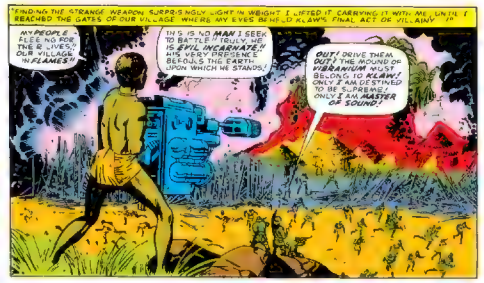
ROGER STERN
EDITOR
JIM SALICRUP
ASSISTANT EDITOR

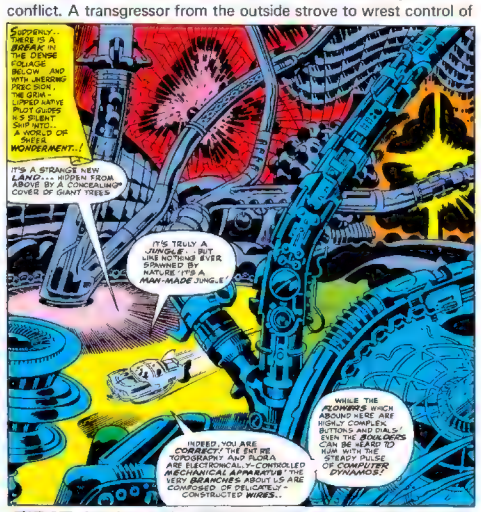
Long time Marvelites fondly remember 1965-66 as watershed years for comics. Stan and Jack were at the peak of their collaborative powers, and new characters, concepts, and cataclysmic confrontations rocketed from the House of Ideas with brain-boggling regularity. The Inhumans, Galactus, the Silver Surfer, the Colonizers, Ego the Living Planet, the Knights of Wundagore and their mentor the High Evolutionary, and Prester John were but a few of the panoply of creations to come out of that halcyon era. In the midst of this creative maelstrom (in Fantastic Four #52 to be exact) was born a superhero sensation who was destined to set the comics industry and audience on its collective ear...the daringly different Black Panther! And he really WAS daringly different, for not only was the Panther the hero/villain of an outstanding story, in the Marvel tradition, but he was the World's FIRST Black Superhero in comics, or any other modern medium! Astonishing as it might seem today, The King of the Wakandas' first appearance was nothing short of a revolutionary event. It soon became apparent that the concept of Black (and other minority) superheroes was an idea whose time had come, and T'Challa quickly became one of Marvel's most popular and most imitated characters. Other comic companies started featuring black heroes, as did the movies and television, but the Panther remains an original and for reasons that go far beyond the color of his skin.

Hereditary ruler of the Hidden Land of the Wakandas, T'Challa is a modern incarnation of the traditional warrior/king myths. His small realm in the heart of the African jungle is a unique harmonization of the old tribal nation, and an advanced technological wonderland. The title 'Black Panther' is a Wakandan institution, bestowed on each monarch in his turn, after he has proved his prowess in battle and is shown to be qualified to lead his people. He is the head of the sacred Panther Cult as well as the political head of the nation. As part of the functions of this office, the Panther must undergo secret rituals and herbal treatments that give him special powers and mastery over the jungle world. Such as: the ability to see in the dark, super-sharp senses, and incredible physical stamina to augment his own cat-like agility and strength. It is the duty of the Wakandan king to protect both the nation and the mysterious Sacred Vibranium Mound from all trespassers and invaders.

T'Challa's first appearance, in FF #52, was the result of just such a conflict. A transgressor from the outside strove to wrest control of the mysterious metal from Wakanda. A brief recap of that adventure is featured in this issue.

After his debut in the FF, the Panther became a member of the Avengers. More and more demands poured into the Marvel offices to give the Panther his own title. Finally, he was given a solo series in Jungle Action #5. Under the tutelage of Dauntless Don McGregor, the Panther's exploits took on a new dimension of maturity and controversy. However, T'Challa didn't get his own book until Jack 'King' Kirby returned to the character he had helped create so long ago. Now Jack has moved on to new projects, and the mantle passes to a new creative team for the Jungle Avenger. Writer Ed Hannigan and artists Jerry Bingham and Gene Day are bringing the Panther back to America under unusual circumstances. Wakanda is at last emerging from its age old isolation to take its place among the nations of the world. The eyes of the world are focussed on Africa as the new frontier for culture, trade, social


FINDING THE STRANGE WEAPON SURPRISINGLY LIGHT IN WEIGHT I LIFTED IT CARRYING IT WITH ME UNTIL I REACHED THE GATES OF OUR VILLAGE WHERE MY EYES BEHELD KLAW'S FINAL ACT OF VILLAINY...!!
MY PEOPLE FLEE! NO ONE THE RULER'S OUR VILLAGE IN FLAMES!
THIS IS NO MAN I SEEK TO BATTLE!! TRULY, HE IS EVIL INCARNATE!! HIS VERY PRESENCE BEFOULS THE EARTH UPON WHICH HE STANDS!
OUT! I DRIVE THEM OUT! THE MOUND OF VIBRANIUM MUST BELONG TO KLAW! ONLY I AM DESTINED TO BE SUPREME! ONLY I AM MASTER OF SOUND!


SUDDENLY... THERE IS A BREAK IN THE DENSE FOLIAGE BELOW... AND WITH UNERRING PRECISION, THE GRIM-LIPPED NATIVE PILOT GUIDES HIS SILENT SHIP INTO... A WORLD OF SHEER WONDERMENT...!
IT'S A STRANGE NEW LAND... HIDDEN FROM ABOVE BY A CONCEALING COVER OF GIANT TREES!
IT'S TRULY A JUNGLE... BUT LIKE NOTHING EVER SPAWNED BY NATURE! IT'S A MAN-MADE JUNGLE!
WHILE THE FLOWERS WHICH ABOUND HERE ARE HIGHLY COMPLEX, BUTTONS AND DIALS! EVEN THE BOULDERS CAN BE HEARD TO HUM WITH THE STEADY PULSE OF COMPUTER DYNAMOS!
INDEED, YOU ARE CORRECT! THE ENTIRE TOPOGRAPHY AND FLORA ARE ELECTRONICALLY-CONTROLLED MECHANICAL APPARATUS! THE VERY BRANCHES ABOUT US ARE COMPOSED OF DELICATELY-CONSTRUCTED WIRES...

FIRST SIGHT OF HIDDEN LAND--THE VILLAINY OF KLAW... A COUPLE OF DRAMA-PACKED SCENES FROM THE PANTHER'S ***PREMIERE APPEARANCE!*** *PLUS:* THE VERY FIRST ACTION SHOT OF THE BLACK PANTHER MARVELDOM EVER SAW, FROM THE COVER OF THE IMMORTAL F.F. #52!

change, and technological development. Conflict seethes on all these fronts, and African leaders are becoming world wide historical figures. Against this background, the Panther must determine the destiny of his nation, and his people's way of life. Even though the primary setting for our tales will be New York, T'Challa will be working to secure his nation's place in the world, and to promote the interests of Wakanda before any other. As an emissary to the center of an empire, the Panther represents a challenge to all who cross his path. To some, the old sobriquet may still have meaning; is he hero or villain? We will not presume to make that judgement. All we promise to present is a more dynamic character; a more feline, more mysterious, and we hope, a deeper look into the Black Panther. We'll be following T'Challa's adventures in New York, down South, in Africa and any other continent the Jungle Monarch stalks.

But, we can't do it alone! We need YOU, Marvel reader, to tell us where we go wrong and where we go right. So, send your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and sage advice to:

Panther Postscripts
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York
10022

And, as someone wrote not too long ago...'NUFF SAID!

After *Black Panther* was cancelled and its ongoing storylines moved to *Marvel Premiere*, Rich Buckler & Bob McLeod's issue #16 cover never saw print.

Black Panther #15, page 2 unused pencils
by Jerry Bingham

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

Black Panther #15, page 3 unused pencils
by Jerry Bingham

Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

BIOGRAPHIES

JACK KIRBY

Jacob Kurtzberg was born in 1917 and grew up in New York's gritty Lower East Side. It would be many years before he would adopt the name Jack Kirby, but his experiences in the neighborhood would help inform the work that later made him a legend. Unlike many of his rough-and-tumble peers, his imagination inspired him to look beyond the commonality of everyday life. He was inclined at an early age to pursue drawing, and he was also a guy who wanted to "get things done." This hard work ethic and ambition took him places most men of humble stations would never dream of going.

After early strip work helped get his name out to employers, a fateful meeting with artist Joe Simon connected the two at the hip and vaulted both of them into comics prominence. Together, they developed Captain America for Timely Comics, and Kirby immediately helped redefine what comics could be with his innovative page designs and proportion-exploding panels.

Soon, Simon and Kirby were working at National/DC, turning out hit kid-gang comics like *Newsboy Legion* and *Boy Commandos*, as well as super-hero fare like Sandman and Manhunter. He served honorably in World War II, with combat duties that took him through the European theater.

After the war, Simon and Kirby established the romance genre with *Young Romance*, produced titles including *Boy's Ranch*, *Black Magic* and *Fighting American*, and started their own imprint, Mainline. Kirby followed with *Challengers of the Unknown*, Green Arrow and the strip *Sky Masters of the Space Force*. By 1958, he began a prolific output at Atlas/Marvel that covered Western, war and monster genres. When it came time to launch the Marvel Age of Comics, Kirby brought his dynamic layouts, unparalleled action and unbridled creativity to the fore in books like *Fantastic Four*, *Avengers*, *X-Men*, *Incredible Hulk* and *Thor*, leaving his unmistakable stamp on the characters.

Through it all, he earned the nickname "The King," and his way of doing things became so popular that it set the tone throughout the '60s; before they were entrusted with taking over completely, new artists were often assimilated on to books by working over Kirby's layouts. Kirby left Marvel for DC in 1970, this time handling scripting chores as well as art duties. His "Fourth World" books, along with *Kamandi*, *OMAC* and *The Demon*, were just a few of the highlights of his tenure at DC before returning to Marvel in the late '70s to lend his imagination to *The Eternals*, *Devil Dinosaur* and *Machine Man*. He also returned to the pages of *Captain America*, the character he had first made famous 35 years previously.

Kirby was inducted into the Eisner Hall of Fame's 1987 inaugural class and continued creating comics throughout the '90s until passing away in 1994, a creative giant for whom the word "legend" may be too small a title.

ED HANNIGAN

Ed Hannigan worked in comics for over two decades, during which time he established himself as a writer, penciler and popular cover artist. In the early 1970s, Hannigan landed a position in Sol Brodsky's production office at Marvel where he learned every part of the comics trade. Soon, the young artist was given a chance to draw covers for the Marvel UK *Planet of the Apes* magazine, which led to interior art on a new *Apes* story written by Doug Moench and cover art on some of Marvel's mainline color comics. His first regular gig was a five-month stint drawing *Kull the Conqueror*. In 1978, he was drafted onto *The Defenders* as penciler, though a year later Hannigan would perform the unusual switch from artist to writer on the title. He would write Marvel's "non-team" for two years with highlights including the "Xenogenesis" and "Tunnelworld" sagas. Other writing credits for Hannigan during this time included a Tigra story in *Marvel Premiere*, *Power Man* and *Black Panther*, where he undertook the noble effort of finishing storylines begun by Jack Kirby and Don McGregor. After scribing *Fantastic Four Annual* #16 drawn by the legendary Steve Ditko, Hannigan began penciling *The Spectacular Spider-Man*. It was here that Hannigan's Eisner-influenced layouts combined with Bill Mantlo's scripts for an influential run that included the debut of Cloak and Dagger. His final work with Marvel was *Amazing Spider-Man Annual* #17, after which he crossed town to draw for DC. There, he launched a new *Green Arrow* series with Mike Grell and *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* with Dennis O'Neil. In 1992, Hannigan wrote and illustrated his own concept, *Skull & Bones*, and followed that up with a four-part Catwoman story in *Showcase '93*. In 1996, Hannigan left comics to take up a new career as a graphic designer.

JERRY BINGHAM

Chicago-born Jerry Bingham had a productive tenure drawing comic books before he transitioned to Hollywood to do storyboard design for motion pictures. While serving a four-year stint in the Air Force, Bingham used his off hours to practice drawing with the sole motivation of one day working for Marvel. Eventually, after a mentorship from Dan Adkins, his dreams of being a comic book pro materialized. In 1978, he would make his debut at DC, where he drew war and horror stories plus a Green Arrow story for *World's Finest Comics*. By 1979, he earned his first credits at Marvel drawing the Black Panther in the character's own title and in *Marvel Premiere*. He also drew several issues of *Iron Man*, *Marvel Two-In-One* and *Marvel Team-Up*. For First Comics, he took over for Frank Brunner on the independent publisher's adaptation of the Broadway play *Warp*, and followed that up with his own adaptation of the epic poem *Beowulf*—a graphic novel he wrote, penciled, inked and colored. In 1987, Bingham collaborated with writer Mike W. Barr on the graphic novel *Batman: Son of the Demon*. The pair joined together again in 1994 sequel for *Batman: In Darkest Knight*. In the latter stages of his comics career, Bingham pursued work in Hollywood, where he excelled in prop design, animation storyboards, and concept design work for theme park attractions. Bingham returned to comics in 2011 to draw a five-issue run of *Batman Confidential*.

JIM SHOOTER

Writer/artist/editor/publisher Jim Shooter broke into comics as a precocious 13-year-old after submitting a batch of Legion of Super-Heroes pages he had written and drawn. Impressed by what was going on at Marvel, the teenager brought his "Marvel-style" attitude to bear on Legion, rolling off a three-year run that concluded in 1969. During this time, he introduced several memorable Legionnaires and villains and also wrote several stories in *Superman*. After a five-year break from comics, Shooter returned to the scene, freelancing for both Marvel and DC. He retook the reins of Legion in *Superboy*, and wrote various Marvel titles, which led to a staff position at Marvel in 1976 and a memorable run on *Avengers*. After two years, he succeeded Archie Goodwin as Marvel's editor in chief. In his view, Marvel at that time was in editorial chaos, not capitalizing on its full potential. Only 27 years old, Shooter forced his will over all aspects of the publishing regime, establishing an incentive system for creators, streamlining the publishing schedule and enforcing his own high editorial standards on all the books. He continued Marvel's success with licensed titles *G.I. Joe* and *Transformers* and the Epic line of creator-owned comics. Creative efforts included writing *Secret Wars* and its sequel, and building the New Universe and writing its flagship title, *Starbrand*. Forced out of the company in 1987, a bid by Shooter to buy Marvel failed. He then formed a group to start his own company, Valiant, which produced licensed and original comics to great acclaim in the early '90s. Despite Valiant's success, Shooter's tenure there was ended after losing control of the corporation. Short-lived imprints Defiant and Broadway Comics followed but were victims of the mid-'90s industry bust. Since then, Shooter has returned to DC to write a 13-issue run of *Legion*, and overseen a revival of Gold Key characters Magnus, Doctor Solar and Turok for Dark Horse.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

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THE MARVEL AGE

It was August 1961 and change was hitting the newsstands. *Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. These were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves—and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different—the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

The *Marvel Masterworks* series was created to give comic-book readers everywhere the chance to experience the greatest comics the world has known as they were originally presented.

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WARLOCK VOLS. 1-2
THE X-MEN VOLS. 1-8
THE UNCANNY X-MEN VOLS. 1-9

THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over the heads of all Americans, a new entertaining escape from the newspapers' horrifying realities was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States.

At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary talents as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. These skilled writers and artists created a vast array of characters that would give rise to the Marvel Universe!

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GOLDEN AGE DARING MYSTERY VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-3
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GOLDEN AGE MYSTIC COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE U.S.A. COMICS VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE YOUNG ALLIES VOLS. 1-2

THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures and unimaginable monsters; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the '40s retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, Atlas had it all!

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YETI!

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LAST HOPE FOR THE WAKANDA!

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THE PANTHER RETURNS TO HIS JUNGLE HOME!
BLACK PANTHER
WHILE THE PLANET TREMBLES, THE PANTHER FACES THE PREDACTYL MIGHT OF—SAHARRA!
THIS WORLD SHALL DIE!

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